



# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 35 – Number 5

September 2017

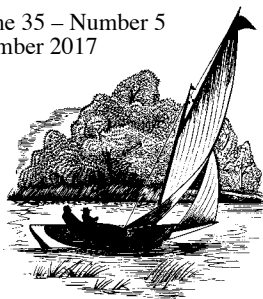
**Special Features This Issue**  
Launching *Centennial* - The Small Reach Regatta  
Camp Cruising on Moosehead Lake - Fish Fry Weekend  
Lost and Gone Forever - A Sharpie for 32 Seasons  
Solely Solar Boating - Building Sawfish II - Slow Bobsleds?



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September 2017



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## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

Something just a bit different in this issue appears on pages 24-29 where I resurrect some memories of the old *Small Boat Journal*, now long gone some 25+ years. The story I wanted to tell is all there so I won't repeat the details here but I did want to write about why I decided to do this.

At a meeting last winter of our local TSCA Chapter there was a pile of early *Small Boat Journals* on the swap table and at meeting's end they were still there so I scarfed them up. Turned out it was the entire set of 15 of the early issues from Vol 1, No 1 through Vol 2 No 3, before the original large format (11"x11" instead of 8 1/2"x11") was abandoned when the magazine was sold to new owners after having run up a substantial deficit, due mainly to the extra cost of publishing the oversize format and also to escalating postal costs mailing it to the by then enthusiastic subscribers.

The appearance of *SBJ* in August 1979 (explained on page 24 by Founder/Editor Dave Getchell) and the disappearance of that original larger format in October 1980 (explained on page 25 by then Managing Editor Jim Brown) was a "brief moment in time" when small boat enthusiasts at last had a magazine that reflected their interests and I, for one, freshly introduced to the charms of small boats, couldn't get enough. So when these came into my possession I could hardly wait to ramble through them, reliving as I re-read articles long forgotten, memories of what I was doing at the time as I dove into the small boat scene with a youthful enthusiasm not native to the almost 50 something I had somehow become.

Amongst them I found four articles of mine that Editor Dave Getchell had accepted, all of which I have recently reprinted on our pages, "Bringing It All Home" (March), "Heads Up" (April), "Resurrecting Old Wooden Boats" (May) and "End of a Love Affair" (July). This acceptance of my writing about my new found interest in this new magazine so obviously talking to all of us, encouraged me in 1983 when I decided to

launch *MAIB* after the "new" *SBJ* that followed the October 1980 changeover left me less than satisfied. Now 34 years and just over 700 issues later it appears that I made a good choice in my mid life career change.

Editor Dave Getchell's choice of feature articles in those golden years (I hasten to add, not just those that I wrote) was an inspired and eclectic mix catering to a broad range of small boaters and not slotted into any one narrow category of small boat. It helped to broaden viewpoints amongst sailing, rowing, paddling and motoring small boaters. The choice of the large format was an inspired one (who remembers the old *Life* magazine, especially oversized by Editor/Publisher Henry Luce to better display his vision of a "picture" magazine in those pre TV days?) for it gave room for larger photos and drawings so vital to many of the chosen topics. Somehow that added 2 1/2" width opened up the small boat world on a larger scale.

As I enjoy re-reading my treasure trove of yesteryear I realized how much of it is still relevant today for many of us. For this reason I chose to reprint a feature article from that first issue, on pages 26-29. Later on its author, when *SBJ* disappeared for good in 1991, signed on with us and became a contributor to our pages. While we do carry on the "philosophy" of the original *SBJ*, the time has passed when anything like the *SBJ* phenomena could be replicated. Contemplating the fate that befell Dave's vision, I am reminded of the old adage that "no good deed goes unpunished."

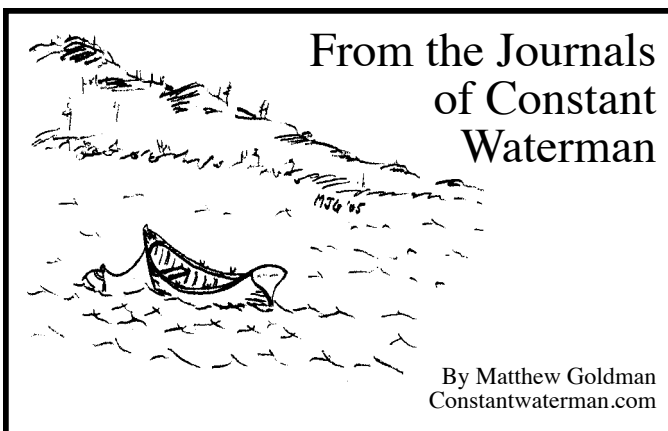
While *SBJ* was indeed a commercial venture in the boating publication field, it was also a "good deed" on Dave's part to make the attempt. It is a pity that insufficient support from the commercial boating trade in the form of advertising (on which all serious print publications survive) robbed us all of this wonderful effort too soon. Apparently the trade could not decide just who the "market" was. Collectively we were not an appropriate "consumer" group. We were, and still are, just small boat folks.

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## On the Cover...

July 4th was a big day on the Parker River in Newbury, Massachusetts, when local boat builder Dan Noyes launched his sixth boat, a replica of the 20' dory sailed from nearby Gloucester to England in 1876 by Gloucester fisherman, Alfred "Centennial" Johnson, in what is regarded as the first single handed solo crossing of the Atlantic. Johnson did it to fulfill a claim made to friends that it could be done and that he could do it to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our nation's independence from Great Britain. And so he did. Full reports on the launching and subsequent appearance of *Centennial II* at the downeast Maine Small Reach Regatta starts on page 8.



There used to be a good sized river running down to the sea. Perhaps it's there even now, but there's no guarantee. I grew up a mile away and used to carry my Grumman canoe over the hill by our upper orchard and down to the ferry landing. Returning, I had to trudge up that long, long hill. Then I got friendly with the couple in that big, yellow colonial by the landing. We kept our canoes on the riverbank beside all those rotten pilings. There'd been a commercial pier out front until the '30s when the river boats made their daily trips to Hartford. Used to be we could ride that boat all the way to New York City, though I can't see why we'd want to.

We had a good storm in '54 when I was just a mere tadpole. I recollect there was water way past the fork in the road and over the Burying Ground. The river road back to the bridge across the creek was under water. That old man who lived across from Dutchman's Point declared he could fish for pickerel in his well the following autumn, but, when he invited me to try, I caught nothing but perch. We can't believe everything folks from our village tell us.

Occasionally, we might see a deer in the river, or maybe a sturgeon. I used to hear stories, growing up, about the unlikely things that got snagged in shad nets. Anything small as a Packard they'd release, but anything decent size, well, they'd likely slice it into steaks and drive it down to the city, then come home and lie to their wives how it took them all night to wrestle it into the boat.

In the summer months there were wild flowers and wild rice and ducks and herons and bushels of fish: everything we'd ever need to make us sneak off through the woods to play on the river. I owned a few acres upstream on an island so, naturally, I built a cabin out there. I had a raft of T&G boards lashed alongside my canoe one day down by the landing, when here came a zealous man in green with an attitude and a hat and a badge to go with it.

"Where you taking that lumber, son?" he demanded imperiously. I wasn't his son, at least I hoped I wasn't. "Just up to my island, Pappy," I said. "Need to get my cabin closed up before you people pass any more regulations." And off I paddled. After all, I had a building permit. I didn't much care that he flailed his arms, jumped up and down, and got water in his shoes. I needed to catch the tide.

Seems as though things have speeded up considerably since then. They started allowing cigarette boats on the River. Then they had to post a speed limit, forty-five knots. How can we see anything at forty-five knots? Do you realize how large a paddle we'd need to canoe at forty-five knots?

At supersonic speeds like that, we'd never hear the wind rattle the cottonwood leaves. At speeds like that, we'd never hear that big bass jump by the cattails. At speeds like that, if we looked up to watch the osprey bringing supper home to her nest, we'd likely run down that oil tanker crossing below the island.

I'd rather be out on a moonlit night paddling back up river to my island when the world is gorged on summer. Nothing to hear but the lonesome croak of the night heron. Nothing to see but the silhouettes of the white oaks imploring the moon from the Seven Sisters. Nothing to feel save the soft slow swell of the flooding tide and the little breeze sweet from the meadows across the river.

As I said, there's no guarantee that river of mine still makes its way down to the restless sea. There's no guarantee it still laps the landing just down the hill beyond our upper orchard. There's no guarantee that the old carp even now patrols the cove. Maybe, if you swing by that way, you might take a look, and break it to me gently.

Matthew Goldman aka Constant Waterman

Author and Illustrator • (860) 912-5886

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# You write to us about...

## Adventures & Experiences...

### Activities & Events...

#### 20th Annual Charity Boat Auction

The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum offers the opportunity to get a great deal on the boat of your dreams this Labor Day weekend during the 20th annual Charity Boat Auction on Saturday, September 2. More than 100 boats ranging in size and performance from sailing dinghies to cabin cruisers, and everything in between will be in the water and on land to be auctioned off to the highest bidders.

Advanced, absentee bids will be accepted and can be called in with payment information at (410) 745-4942 or taken in person until noon on Friday, September 1, 2017. As an absolute auction, all boats will be sold the day of the event with a title office set up at CBMM for ease of transfer. All boats must be removed by Monday, September 4. Proceeds from the rain or shine event benefit the children and adults served by CBMM's education, restoration and exhibition programming.

Auction boats will be available for preview on Thursday, August 31, and Friday, September 1, from 9am to 5pm each day with a \$5 non member admission. Guests can also preview the boats beginning at 8am the day of the event with the live auction beginning at 11am along CBMM's Miles River waterfront campus.

CBMM's Charity Boat Donation Program Director Todd Taylor takes donations and resells boats throughout the year, holding aside some of the inventory for the annual auction. Taylor travels the East Coast working with boat owners, yacht brokers, marinas, boatyards and other donors and potential buyers wanting to support CBMM through boat donations and sales.

"One hundred percent of the revenue generated by the auction goes directly toward helping CBMM's educational programs and restoring and preserving its historic structures and boats," says Taylor. "Each donated boat helps the museum do great things for the people we serve."

The event also includes a flea market style tag sale from 9am to 11am where guests can purchase a variety of used boating gear including ground tackle, electrical equipment, hardware, rope and chain, oars, life jackets, fishing tackle, motors and more. Auction boats and the official rules can be viewed at [cbmm.org/boatauction](http://cbmm.org/boatauction) with inventory updated weekly.



#### We Won!

Last night was a bit rough. We led our class most of the Marblehead/Halifax Race until the afternoon Tuesday. Then the wind died. I think we were a little behind by about 7pm. Then the winds really started picking up. By midnight it was blowing over 20mph. We made up the ground and won by an hour but that exacted a significant toll on the crew.

About 12:30am I awoke to an awful banging as pots, pans, dishes, food stocks and personal stuff were desperately trying to get out of their confines and raise more hell on the floor. We were rolling 20°-25° constantly so I was only able to sleep from about 11pm to 12:30am. That was it. The rest of the night was very noisy and sleep was pointless.

About 1:30am we decided to take down a sail in the rain and wind. The guys on duty to disconnect it were clothed properly. I was below the hatch to receive the sail and stuff it into a sail bag. With rain and wind it was an all hands on deck moment and I am in my pjs dealing with rain coming through the hatch along with a soaked sail. If I get asked to crew in two years I am going to spend extra time thinking about the prospects of getting soaked at 1:30am in the morning. This was my fourth race to Halifax.

The noise barrage continued until dawn at which point it was time to make some coffee and get breakfast going. The coffee was a big hit because the temperature had dropped to about 50° topside. We had to be dressed like we were going for a snowmobile ride in January. The Bay of Maine can be very cold and unpleasant in July. I did damage control once the coffee was started and determined that nothing was broken or spilled. We did a good job of storing our equipment and food. During this trying time I determined that if we could average 6 knots the rest of the way, we should retake the lead and that is exactly what everybody worked for and accomplished. I do not think anyone got more than two hours of sleep Tuesday night.

Highlights of the trip also included seeing lots of porpoises, a few Minke and Right whales and a couple of harbor seals. The porpoises and seals were curious of this thing in the water and would follow us a short distance trying to figure it out.

We crossed the finish next to last which means we did not win the Cook's Plate. We won first place in our class because of the handicap assigned to each boat. Ours was high and made the difference. Handicaps are used to average boat designs and crew skills. Just buying a faster boat then the other guy does not make for good competition. But there is nothing that can help you if you get in an area of no wind.

The *Prospector* turned in the fastest time and created a new record, 28 hours, 28 minutes, 50 seconds, 363 nautical miles in 28.5 hours. It AVERAGED 12.7 knots, that is crazy fast. There were times where it was moving over 24mph but it is a million dollar plus boat, special ordered and manned by 20

people. Our *Snow Cat* took 66 hours, 47 minutes, 51 seconds. We averaged 5.4 knots per hour. And there were seven of us crewing.

The only boating accident we heard about was that during a tack a boom smacked an ePod off a boat and into the water. At about three grand that hurts, but what was truly an embarrassing moment was when we got a radio call from the Coast Guard about someone going overboard. The ePod will send an emergency signal to the Coast Guard if it gets submerged with saltwater. The Coast Guard will send a helo in a situation like that to find the person. I bet that captain will find a safer place for that gadget.

### This Magazine...

#### July "Over the Horizon"

I certainly have appreciated *MAIB* for the memories as well as the current material it brings. The July "Over the Horizon" reminds me of an early '60s *Mad Magazine* parody of the Pogo Possum comic strip. The punch line was something like, "Don't mess with politics."

Joel Daskall, S Pasadena, CA

#### WWI Subchaser Article

I want to say a hearty "thanks" to Susanne Altenburger for bringing us the very entertaining excerpt from the journal of Capt Alex Moffat in the May issue. The account of Capt Moffat's perilous trans Atlantic voyage in a wooden WWI subchaser was spell-binding. It was very well written with a spare and straightforward style that enhanced the drama of the events. It appears that Susanne's good taste is not limited to boats.

Spencer Rowe, Ocean City, MD

#### MAIB a Delight

I am pleased to renew my subscription. Each month it is a delight to find *MAIB* in my mailbox. The far ranging topics and coverage are fascinating. There are many pleasant hours of reading in each issue, including those vicarious adventures and projects in someone else's garage.

Jim McKelvey, Newark, DE

#### Thanks for Another Year of Great Articles

I always read Doc Regan first. That's a lie, I always read the comics first but Doc is second. I don't know which I like better, the "how tos" or the "excursions." That's it, the "how to excursions." Thank you and all your contributors for another year of great reading, and they keep getting better!

Johnny Mack, Morehead City, NC





## The Publisher Says...

Inexplicably out of print since the late 1940s, *Messing About in Boats* is one of the most charming and evocative accounts of work and leisure afloat in the years either side of the Great War (WWI, Ed). John Muir describes with humour and humanity the perils of boat acquisition and ownership by the impecunious and the somewhat mixed talents of the Paid Hand. But his account is more than balanced by the interest and pleasure he took in working and sailing in English waters, from the North Sea to the Bristol Channel, in an age long before the marina, radio and GPS.

Muir provides two valuable first hand accounts of work afloat under steam and sail before the War while he was on half paid leave between assignments in the Royal Navy: In the North Sea "boxing" fleet of trawlers which remained on station for weeks on end, where he served in his medical capacity, and later in the Bristol Channel Pilot service, where he crewed on a cutter, delivering the pilot to incoming ships in all weathers.

His unfavourable views of the qualities of the Bristol Channel Pilot Cutter as a yacht may surprise its aficionados today but he relented sufficiently to own two of them, *Maud* and *Freda*, which feature in the book.

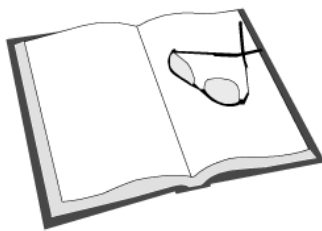
Cover: "Come Aboard" (detail), water-colour by Martyn Mackrill. One of our foremost marine artists, Martyn Mackrill is Honorary Painter to the Royal Yacht Squadron and Royal Thames Yacht Club. [martynmackrill.co.uk](http://martynmackrill.co.uk)

### About the Author

John R. Muir, Surgeon Rear Admiral, Royal Navy, Temporary Lieutenant, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, was the son of the Rev J. Muir, Grenada. Born in 1873, he was educated at George Watson's College, Edinburgh, and he graduated MB, CM, from Edinburgh University in 1894. Indulging in his great love of the sea, he joined the Royal Navy. In the first world war as Fleet Surgeon he served in the famous battle cruiser *H.M.S. Tiger* and did heroic work at the battle of Jutland. He was awarded the Croix de Guerre in 1917 and was twice mentioned in dispatches. He took the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, in 1924 and retired from the Navy in that year with the rank of Surgeon Rear Admiral.

On the outbreak of the Second World War Muir, along with four other enthusiastic yachtsmen whose united ages were said to amount to 280 years, applied to be allowed to serve in the RNVR with the auxiliary patrol and Churchill granted them commissions. Their story, recorded in *The Gallant Little Campeador* by Cecil Hunt (Methuen, 1941) culminated in the tragedy of 22nd June 1940, when *H.M.S. Campeador V*, their requisitioned private motor yacht, was blown up with all hands by an enemy mine near Portsmouth. (Based with thanks on the War Records at George Watson's College, Edinburgh).

(Lodestar Books was established in 2009 to publish new and neglected nautical writing. Please visit our website to see all of our books, and to join our mailing list if you would like to be kept informed of new titles, [www.lodestarbooks.com](http://www.lodestarbooks.com))



## Book Review

### *Messing About in Boats*

By John Muir

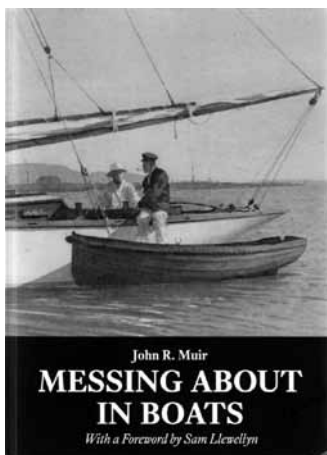
First published in 1938 by Blackie & Son

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by Lodestar Books

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Reviewed by Bob Hicks



### The Reviewer Says...

How'd I ever pass up this one what with that title? We've had reviews of several of the classic old British seafaring books being republished by Lodestar books, most recently in the February issue (pages 6 and 7) where John Nystrom reviewed *The Canoe Yawl* and I lavished praise upon what Lodestar is doing bringing all this great reading from out of the past to us. I'll not repeat all of that but have included a composite photo of some of the Lodestar titles you might want to acquire should you share my enthusiasm for this long ago writing about small boating in the UK.

So how did I miss this one for so long? Apparently I put it into my chairside book basket to be read in due course and subsequently it got covered up with more books (the basket is usually is full to the top and is often overflowing onto the adjacent floor). In a recent attempt at tidiness (which does not come naturally to me) I unloaded the whole basket to sort them out and there it was. Sitting back to skim through it I was soon caught up in the 17 chapters and that was it, nothing else intruded until I had read the whole 208 pages over the next couple of evenings. It proved impossible to stop at any chapter ending, hadda see what came next.

My best way to recommend this book is to bring you a short chapter (seven pages in the book) so you can decide for yourself about its appeal. Lazy of me, perhaps, but much more persuasive of its merits.

## A Good Run

We spent a day or two in Portland, and then made a passage to Cowes which took exactly thirty-six hours for the forty-four miles as there was hardly a breath of wind the whole way. In the Solent we did all the usual things: ran ashore on the Shrape mud going into Cowes because my draught was only five feet, and I thought I could play hanky-panky with the deep channel; anchored in Portsmouth harbour in a forbidden area, and were chased out of it by the King's Harbourmaster (as an old shipmate he need not have been so infernally jubilant about catching me out); ran ashore in the Beaulieu River, and introduced Vincent (the author's hired crewman. Ed.) to some of the joys of kedging off unsuccessfully on a falling tide; in spite of our efforts to avoid it, got in the way of some racing craft and learned, to my disappointment, that there was some vituperation I did not know, but could readily remember for use on a future occasion; cleared out of Stokes Bay in the middle of the night for a southerly gale, and learned to my surprise that there is not a single good safe harbour for small craft in the Solent that can be entered in the dark; and finally anchored off Stevens' yard, just above the Royal pier at Southampton, with five days of my leave still to go and two hundred odd miles from my destination.

In accordance with a private arrangement made before starting on my expedition, I went ashore to the post office and sent a reply paid telegram submitting that forty-eight hours extension of leave might be granted to me. A few hours later the answer arrived and was handed to me. 'Extension of leave not approved.' That was a blow as I had been confident of getting the extra leave when I sent off the telegram. Something must have gone wrong, and there was nothing to do except obey my orders. 'Growl you may but go you must.' With luck I might be able to take the ship back with me, so we got busy although there was a lot to be done before we could make a dash for it.

I went ashore to buy provisions while Vincent filled up with water. We had made up our minds that we would remain at sea if the weather were light until we arrived at Chatham; if we made good progress we might call at Dover. Vincent's solution of the problem of making passages in the shortest possible time was to keep going, and I quite agreed with him. We turned in late but all ready to get under way at seven the next morning as this time would give us the most favourable tide.

We were wakened at dawn by the motion of the ship and the noise of the wind, both sufficiently assertive to assure us that we were not fated to suffer the annoyance of a flat calm at any rate. A glance outside showed the wind was fair and that there was plenty of it. We discussed whether it was wise to start, and decided that it was worthwhile having a look at it. The first twenty miles would be in sheltered water, and we could come back if the wind were too strong for us. After that, well, there was Dover, a hundred miles away. Newhaven as a port of refuge was not considered such by us.

What with the breakfast, weighing the kedge, hauling down a reef in the main and staysails, securing everything for sea, getting the canvas up and the anchor weighed and secured, it was nearly nine before we got away and tore down Southampton Water, the shores of which were invisible in the heavy

rain squalls. It soon became evident that we would have to pull down the second reef and shift the second jib for the spiffire. We nursed her into the shelter of Osborne Bay and shoved her up in the wind. After stripping off our oilies and seaboots we effected the desired reduction of canvas, had a further bout of securing, put her in front of it and let her go. About that period there was a saying, 'Klondyke or bust'. For us it was a case of 'Dover or bust'.

I had intended to take the Looe channel, and with that idea had read up the sailing directions in the most depressing volume the Admiralty has ever issued from the Hydrographic Department. As we swept past Ryde Pier I recalled with gloom that 'The Looe channel, lying as it does within the whole line of dangers, barred at its narrow western entrance by heavy overfalls, is only adapted for those possessing local knowledge except under very favourable circumstances.'

I had pretty good local knowledge and I knew that, in this weather, these overfalls would make Portland Race, as we had experienced it, look like a millpond in comparison. The only alternative was to go round the Owers, and Vincent was able to cheer me up by telling me of some of his exploits in that unpleasant locality. On top of that we were going to add ten miles to what was threatening to be a poisonous passage.

There was nothing for it but to shape a course for the Nab lightship from the Warner. As we passed close to her she sent up a string of flags which I was too frightened to read so I ignored them. One thing I do know. It was not the signal TCZ or, in other words, 'I wish you a pleasant voyage'. They did not seem to be having any too good a time themselves and, 'Nasty job they have in these 'ere lightships,' remarked Vincent, 'I wouldn't take one of them on, no not for nothing I wouldn't.'

She was old and unutterably disreputable when I had my first sight of her lying on the beach at Penrhyn. I cursed my pathetic trust in the advertisement, 'Sound and seaworthy cruiser for sale', that had brought me all the way from Chatham at a cost of over five pounds. Varnish did not exist, paint had blistered off in huge flakes everywhere, her bottom planking was bare, and rust and neglect were rapidly hastening her towards dissolution. It was hardly worth going any farther, I thought, but 'Better have a look at her now that you have come so far' was suggested by the caretaker in reply to my snort of disappointment.

'You haven't taken much care of her. What do you think you were paid for?'

'I wasn't paid for doing anything, and that's what's the matter with her. She's perfectly sound and good whatever she looks like. I'm a poor man and I can't afford to keep up other people's boats out of my own pocket.' This argument was unanswerable, and I climbed on board fretting and fuming, my wrath transferred to the owner who had written such glowing descriptions of the beauty of his ship.

Down below there was the same evidence of neglect, but the accommodation was unusually good for a 13-ton yawl, and I was soon able to assure myself that there was nothing a little labour and cleanliness could not put to rights. Then I went over the side and, armed with a hammer and knife which

The Owers lightship when we passed her, plunging and straining at her anchors, and shipping it green over her bows, also sent up a string of signals to us. In fact, as Vincent commented: 'Quite chatty, them fellows. I suppose it's a bit dull for them out here.' I did not say anything as I had a shrewd idea they were telling me things I'd rather not know, so the code book was left in its locker. Soon they were lost to sight in the murk astern.

By this time we had lost the shelter of the Island. The wind did not seem quite so strong, and since we had dropped the Owers the sea had become more regular, and the ship easier to hold. She was running without the wild gyrations from side to side that had made a spinning top of the compass, and making it necessary to steer by sight and guess. If we were to make a decent course to Beachy Head, thirty-six miles away, and not pile up on the Seven Sisters or the Varne shoal, it was essential that the compass should have a sense of duty and responsibility.

With the easier steering and the steadier compass all our difficulties seemed to vanish, and there was a feeling of intense exhilaration in the way the ship rose and fell to the huge combers coming up astern. I only looked aft once, and then I recognized the wisdom of the old sailing ship skippers who boxed their helmsman in so that they could only see ahead. The sight was terrifying and yet somehow queerly exciting and satisfying. Vincent grinned his monkey's grin when I hastily turned my head round and glued my eyes on the compass.

We were eating up the miles, and so far everything was all right, but as soon as the tide turned against us the sea would rapidly get much worse and the real trial would begin. I told my doubts to my companion, but he just laughed and refused to meet trouble halfway. 'Never mind the tides. Gimme a

fair wind.' 'You've got it, you ronyon'". He grinned more cheerfully than ever.

As evening came on the wind blew harder than ever, the tide began to ebb and the sea lost its regular character. Where it had sprayed it now soused us. The main boom was tripping in the water on the lee side, which added greatly to the difficulty of steering and kept me on tenterhooks in case of a jibe. The ship was becoming hard pressed, and it was time to give her some relief. I was nervous about rounding her up in the wind, so we did what we could to ease her by tricing up the tack of the mainsail and stowing the reefed staysail, but these measures were of only temporary benefit.

We would have to get her round somehow, and at last, with my heart in my mouth or my boots, I really don't know which, I watched for a smooth and put the helm down while Vincent rounded in on the mainsheet. She came up all right, but at the end of the manoeuvre hit the sea a biff that sent a cloud of spray over us and effectually completed our soaking. Vincent shook his fist at it, and then we stripped the oilies and got on with the work. It was very heavy labour with the canvas like pasteboard and the reef points like wood. In the meantime we were astonished at the quietness with which she lay. With the spiffire jib aback and the helm a little down she gently bowed the sea and was perfectly dry and comfortable. So when Vincent suggested that we should get her going again I refused to listen. 'Not before we have had something to eat and a shift into dry clothes.'

In the gathering darkness we dived below to such comparative comfort as I am rarely likely to experience again. We had had nothing to eat since breakfast, and had been soaked to the skin for hours, and we fairly gloated over the snug dryness of the saloon. Vincent sat on the floor with the Primus between his knees and boiled the water, while

## Dorothy



I used freely, made a preliminary survey as to her condition. Whilst I worked my companion shed what light he could on her history. She was built by Musselwhite in Poole about twenty-five years before as a pilot boat, and after some years of service had been converted into a yacht by building a coach roof over the well.

The ship was not registered, and did not appear in any yacht list, so it was impossible to confirm or deny his statements but, as I proceeded with my examination, I had ample proof that she had been well and faithfully built by a master craftsman. There was nothing the matter with the outside planking, so the survey of the frames was undertaken as far as was possible. The scrap-iron ballast was cemented in, and it was out of the ques-

tion to be able to say what was happening under the cement, but as the frames were perfectly sound where they disappeared under the cement, I was of opinion that they must be all right.

Her dimensions proved to be: length, 33'; waterline, 30'; beam, 10'; draught, 5'. It was the draught that had originally appealed to me when I read the advertisement, as I had longings to visit the Dutch canals, and everything I knew about these fascinating waterways pointed to 5' as the maximum draught permissible if one wanted to see much of the country.

The result of my examination was so satisfactory that I got an estimate from the caretaker for hogging her out, cleaning off all the old paint and varnish, outside and inside, and repainting and revarnishing to my specification. Having subtracted this sum from the price quoted to me I made an offer which was so promptly accepted that it left me wondering whether I had been unduly generous.

In reply to my remarks on the state the ship was in, the owner, who lived in the north of England, said that he had been shamefully served by the people he had entrusted with her care. That ought to have opened my eyes, but at the time I put it down to the spleen of a man who had found out that property deteriorates unless you spend money on its upkeep.

I pulled off my wet clothing and chucked it in a heap into the fo'c'sle. Then I dressed and luxuriated in the warm dry clothing than which nothing is more acceptable when you are wet and chilled.

Vincent changed while I took his place on the floor and finished the boiling. We drank pints of scalding hot tea, ate our fill, and then insisted on a smoke before we faced the beastly night outside again. But we dare not stay too long in that blissful comfort because we knew we should drop off to sleep if we did. As it was it took a violent effort to drag ourselves away. Vincent's 'We mustn't waste a fair wind' took us on deck in a hurry.

Off once more, with Beachy showing a little on our lee bow just where we had wanted to see it, and soon we were galloping past the *Royal Sovereign*, held by the tide broadside on to the sea and rolling damnably. The wind had taken off a bit but the sea was vicious and the compass useless. With the loom of the coast towns to guide us, Wee Willie Winkie on the point of Dungeness hove in sight long before his more august brother, and all was well as far as our course was concerned, just as dawn was breaking, and a horrid high dawn it was, we rounded the Ness, and out from behind it came the big Dutch pilot schooners that had been sheltering under its lee for the night.

Still the strong wind drove us on, but to the east of Dungeness the sea rapidly subsided and all was peace and comfort. The harbour at Dover was not completed but we passed in through the western entrance, had a look at Dover Wick and saw little chance of getting a billet in that crowded anchorage, carried on and dropped our anchor a little to the east of an old promenade pier which used to stand in the bay in front of the town. We had taken exactly twenty hours from Southampton, one hundred and twenty miles away.

Where we lay we rolled and rolled, but no roll on the sea could have disturbed the sleep Vincent and I lay down to when we had finished, and cleared up, breakfast. We were still rolling when we woke about two p.m., and soon the ceaseless motion became maddening. It was useless to think of leaving before dawn the following morning as I had no wish to attempt the navigation of the Thames in the dark.

At last we got desperate and decided to spend an hour or two ashore. We dressed, the ladder was put over the side, and Vincent held the boat to the ship's side to let me get in. I had got into the boat but was still holding on to the gangway stanchion when the yacht lurched heavily towards me, and the gunwale of the dinghy got under the ladder and was forced under the water. Here was a mess up. I was standing in the submerged dinghy holding on to it with my toes and still having a grip of the stanchion.

Vincent had been thrown into the water and, as he could not swim, was running considerable risk of drowning. My difficulty was to clear up the mess without losing Vincent, the dinghy, or the ship. Somehow with my right hand I managed to grab Vincent and haul him towards the channels, and I do not think that even in his stage days he ever made a quicker come back than when he clambered on board. The rest was easy, but the job of getting the water out of the dinghy was a teaser on account of the heavy rolling. After we had changed we got ashore, but not in the same condition to delight the eye as when we started.



## The Original Centennial From Wikipedia

Alfred "Centennial" Johnson (1846–1927) was a Danish born fisherman from Gloucester, Massachusetts. In 1876, in a 20' (6.1m) sailing dory, he made the first recorded single handed crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, landing at Abercastle in West Wales as a celebration of the first centennial of the United States. Local author Rob Morris has also written a book about the crossing called *Alfred "Centennial" Johnson*.

Johnson's dory, *Centennial*, is now in the collection of the Cape Ann Museum in Gloucester, Massachusetts. It is frequently displayed alongside Howard Blackburn's sloop *Great Republic*, a vessel which was also used in a single handed trans -Atlantic crossing.

### Conception

Alfred Johnson (sometimes spelled Johnsen) was born in Denmark on December 4, 1846. He had run away to sea as a teenager and, after working on sailing ships, eventually ended up as a fisherman in Gloucester, Massachusetts. One day in 1874 he and some friends were playing cards and discussing the possibility of a single handed Atlantic crossing when Johnson declared that not only would such a crossing be possible but that it could be carried out in an open dory and that he could do it. When his friends scoffed, Johnson set out to prove them wrong.

Johnson planned to carry out his voyage as a celebration of the first centennial of the United States, his aim was to sail to Liverpool, hoping to make the 3,000-mile journey in under 90 days. He bought a 20' (6.1m) dory, named her *Centennial* and prepared and provisioned her for sea. She was fitted out with a centerboard and three watertight compartments which would help her float if capsized, until she could be righted.

### The Voyage

He sailed on the crossing on June 15, 1876. He stopped briefly in Nova Scotia to make some adjustments to his ballast, then set off into the open ocean around June 25. He was sighted by several ships along the way, most of which attempted to rescue him, only to be astonished when he refused. At one time he received a gift of two bottles of rum from a passing ship.

Johnson managed an average pace of about 70 miles (110km) a day, quite respectable for such a small boat in the open sea, and survived a major gale which capsized the boat. Against the odds, he finally made landfall at Abercastle, a small port in Wales, on Saturday, August 12. After two days' rest, he finished his voyage by sailing into Liverpool on August 21, 1876, to an enthusiastic reception.

Johnson received some attention for his feat and his boat was exhibited in Liverpool for several months, he was thereafter known as Alfred "Centennial" Johnson. When asked late in life why he had done it, he said, "I made that trip because I was a damned fool, just as they said I was."

Johnson's voyage was the first recorded single handed crossing of the Atlantic and perhaps the first major single handed passage carried out in the spirit of adventure.



## Launching Centennial

By Pike Messenger

This Water Closet is about family and friends who gathered at the Newbury, Massachusetts, landing on the Parker River at high tide on the morning of July 4 to watch the launching of builder Dan Noyes' copy of a famous sailing dory, *Centennial II*. The original *Centennial* sailing dory was built by fisherman Alfred Johnson in 1776 and then sailed by him across the Atlantic to England. His story at left will fascinate you.

Six-year-old Coral Withe, leaning against *Centennial II* on Fourth of July, said, "This is beautiful." Assembled family and friends gathered for the launching of builder Dan Noyes' copy of a famous sailing dory agreed.

Last year Dan and this old Closeteer visited the first *Centennial* at Cape Ann's lovely museum near the city hall in Gloucester. In 1776 patriotic fisherman Alfred Johnson built her and then sailed her across the Atlantic to the country we had broken away from a century before. Dan carefully took the measurements off Johnson's still intact 20' dory while the Closeteer roamed the museum admiring other boats and fishing schooner models of note, and especially Fitz Henry Lane's well known paintings of Gloucester Harbor in the days of sail.

A year passed as Dan's new *Centennial II*, still not yet named, took shape in his small boat shop. Finally, when almost finished, she was launched at high tide the morning of July 4, 2017, 241 years after our nation's independence had been so bravely declared. Dan left her in cord grass at the old Newbury Landing on the Parker River as the water slipped away. In spanking new red, white and blue paint she would lay until Dan returned at high tide in the evening to anchor her just off the river channel.

On her second night on the water he would sleep on the narrow floor between centerboard and side planks where Johnson had slept, or tried to, for 52 days in the summer of 1876. Enroute to England, the *Centennial* swamped twice in storms, was righted in warm Gulf Stream water and bailed out. The renowned *Centennial* voyage averaged 70 or so miles per day under three sails, a large

main and two foresails and oars now and then. Dan has no plans for crossing.

Since Johnson's, the first recorded crossing sailing in a dory alone, a dozen or more solitary rowers and sailors have followed in small boats. No radios or other modern safety devices helped the early fishermen who toiled in thousands of dories without even lifejackets.

We are now eager to see her 21st century replica under sail. Dan, who is currently dealing with sailmakers, has plans for several hundred pounds of ballast on the keel. Johnson had successfully designed his for quick righting if tipped over at sea. What the Closeteer temporarily calls *Centennial II* may have a name by her first sailing, the builder has solicited suggestions. The Closeteer has put forth *Togetheragain*, thus celebrating not rebellion but a team of stalwart allies in the two world wars and beyond.

This year under new administrations, a Brexit one in Great Britain and a Make America Great Again here, there have been strains. We wonder how Johnson's arrival seemingly celebrating separation was received upon arrival in Abercastle, Wales, on August 12, 1876, and in Liverpool on August 21. *Togetheragain*, Britain-America, like *Sevenovus*, a name given Dan's great grandfather Henry Woodard's new fishing boat out of Rings Island in the 1940s, has a positive message. Henry's daughter Ruth named her dad's new boat for the seven members of her family. *Abercastle*, where Johnson safely landed on British soil, is being mulled over along with other names by Dan.

Whatever her name she, as little daughter Coral Withe from a boat building family of six exclaimed, is a beauty. Her low key launching by family on the Parker's lovely summer bank was in the Closeteer's opinion a better Fourth than ones with patriotic speeches, gun salutes or fireworks displays. The ebb quietly flowed over her new planks painted with our colors and via the Gulf Stream will follow in Johnson's wake to England our mother country. It's too bad the late John Lennon from Liverpool isn't around to write a song about her.

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**Editor Comments:** Both of Pike's essays first appeared in *The Watercloset*, the online journal of the Middleton (Massachusetts) Stream Team, of which Pike has been a long time member and motivator. We first met Pike ever so many years ago during his Ring's Island Rowing Club days when he used his then teaching position at the Triton Regional High School to introduce students the rewards of building and rowing traditional dories.



## Rockbound

By Pike Messenger

As much of the Wisconsin continental glacier turned to liquid water, the rising ocean moved up the valleys and around the hills and mountains of Maine. Their tops became islands and peninsulas, their valleys bays. After the ice was gone plants and men populated the rocky land. This happened in the past 15,000 years, no time at all to geologists. In the last few millennia people have been “messing about in boats” along these salty shores. The Indians did so in birch bark and dugout canoes until gutsy fishermen and colonists from afar arrived in sailboats to take over the seas and shores. No fair wind did these newcomers bring to the Indians who were soon gone from their summer playgrounds by the sea.

Fast forward 300 years to the last century. Since childhood many of us have been told stories and later read yarns, many false, about those early days with colonization and Manifest Destiny in mind. As kids we built rafts and little boats. Occasionally we recovered one freed from its mooring by a nor’easter. The old Closeteer’s first boat was a skiff found in a post storm driftwood line. He named the river worthy boat the *Whistler* after the Golden Eye Duck, also called Whistler. Thus he, like many near water, became a boat enthusiast. There are thousands forever hankering for a time away on water even though they no longer need to be for a living. It is fun, interesting and challenging.

Some have formed groups of kindred souls, many who build their own boats in cellars, garages and sheds. One organization here on the Yankee coast and beyond is the Traditional Small Craft Association (TSCA). Their boat fever has been exacerbated over the last four decades by the fancy magazine *WoodenBoat* and the unfancy, but comfortably homey, *Messing About in Boats* magazine, the latter sometimes mentioned here in the Stream Team’s weekly *Water Closets*.

Tom Jackson, “Currents” Editor of *WoodenBoat*, long a leader in all things in wooden boating, helped organize a gathering of tiny yachts called the Small Reach Regatta (SRR). For the past 12 years the regatta has attracted small vessels from up and down the coast and even inland lakes. Owners, many their builders, gather on Maine’s rockbound coast among long ago immersed hills now islands showing nice green tops where ledge and salt spray allows. The hardscrabble farms are gone as is most of the fishing. Lobsters and tourists are now the targets. Old tourists still passing north are reminded of the “Keep Maine Green” signs that greeted them at the border mid last century. The tourists soon learned the request had two meanings.

Serious boat builder Dan Noyes, once a student of the Closeteer’s and a young member of the Rings Island Rowing Club on the Mighty Merrimack, invited the old timer to crew in his spanking new *Centennial II* at the TSCA’s 2017 annual soiree. The first *Centennial*, a 20’ Gloucester dory, was sailed across the Atlantic by Alfred Johnson alone in 1876 to celebrate our country’s hundredth birthday. Dan launched his red, white and blue copy appropriately on July 4th (see preceding article). He then rigged it in time for the Small Reach Regatta (SRR) held July 18 to 23 in the cold waters around way downeast Brooklin, Maine.

In Brooklin about 90 boat devotees arrived along with 58 small motorless vessels for three days of sailing, rowing and happy boat talk about ballast, trim, sail rigs, boat finishes, glues and a hundred other boat topics. The Closeteer no longer felt so old, a good two-thirds of the participants looked like grandparents and some even great grandparents. In and around their vessels they moved like teenagers, albeit a little slower. Many joyfully lent helping hands when lugging boats around. Even the old Closeteer

scrambled in and out and about *Centennial II* with renewed vigor hoping Captain Dan wouldn’t think him a malingerer.

Enthusiasm and good cheer were the orders of the day. Even heads hits by shifting booms managed smiles. Passing on either land or sea most of the sailors and rowers greeted each other heartily. In the evenings around the campfire sailor musicians played several instruments and sang chanteys and salty ballads. All learned that mosquitoes like music. Kindred souls all as happy as could be, as befits Kenneth Grahame’s famous words in *Wind in the Willows* by River Rat to Mole, “There is nothing... absolutely nothing... so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.”

The Closeteer, long a rower, quickly learned there is nothing “simple” about today’s small craft and their modern gear when added to the numerous variables of sailing. Many of the gung ho skippers had 20 pieces of equipment aboard their small craft. The days of the basic fishing dories without life jackets are long gone. Visit a boat store and you’ll see what is meant. Bring plenty of money.

What Mole and Rat couldn’t have known was the number of boats made by different hands over the centuries that would evolve. There must have been 20 species each with several subspecies at the regatta. Well represented was the dory with a half dozen types made of different materials, heavy and light. Some TSCA purists, who pride themselves on wood, frown on molded plastic but still kindly allow them in the SRR fleet. Here are a few types and rigs Dan named for the new to the scene Closeteer: duck punt, peapod, melonseed, Swampscott dory, pearl, lug, ketch, yawl, lateen, Marconi rig, sprit rig, sloop, Beetle cat, sandbagger and on and on.

Once underway, more or less together at first, the vessels showed their stuff in various winds as the ever more spread out fleet threaded its way among lobster buoys. It must have amused the lobstermen to have so much non working company. They motored from pot to pot among us providing gentle wakes, well knowing we might buy lobsters.

Long ago when the Indian and Colonial children picked up lobsters from low tide pools life was much harder but perhaps more rewarding to those who earned their living from the sea. They paddled and sailed at the mercy of the gods. The Indians, long integrated with their surroundings, gave thanks to the animals, plants and rocks they saw as kin. The Colonists built churches on the ledges and gave thanks to God.

Each early morning in first light, after rolling from his tent, the Closeteer hiked a mile up an empty highway to admire the vegetation that richly populated the hard land with little soil. The rising sun reflected off blueberries, spruces, firs, bayberry and lichens, the latter covering exposed rock. On a gentle rise he found a Spartan looking church, one of two in sparsely populated Brooklin. This church, called Rockbound, no denomination noted, had a sign up announcing “Hymn Sing, All Invited, July 27.”

What events those must have been in the days before radio and TV when spread out neighbors in a beautiful hard land gathered to gossip, sing and pray. The Closeteer bet much of the talk year round was of boats and gear as it was back at the SRR camp. The difference is that those talkers of old wouldn’t be leaving after a week of play.

*Messing About in Boats*, September 2017 – 9





## The Small Reach Regatta

By Richard Honan

I spent a weekend late in July down in Brooklin, Maine, at the Small Reach Regatta, a gathering of small boat owners from all over the Northeast. It was sponsored by the Downeast Chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association. Approximately 60 boats ranging in size from 12' to 21'. The majority of the boats were wooden, along with a few fiberglass boats. Almost all of the boats were powered by sail but there were a half dozen one and two man rowing boats that joined the fleet on our daily trips to one of the outer islands. My brother Bill drove up from Annapolis, Maryland, and joined me in Winthrop, Massachusetts, from where we trailered my 16' Melonseed sailboat *Proud Mary 2* downeast to Brooklin.

Accommodations at Ocean Front Camp- ing at Reach Knolls was old school camping in tents. The Small Reach Regatta reserves the whole campground for the entire five day regatta. The camping may have been a little rustic but Lori and her husband make every- one feel at home with their hospitality. Most of the participants signed up for the five day meal plan, breakfast, box lunches and dinner. Some people brought and prepared their own food. Going to a local restaurant or a Dunkin Donut was a distance away, a ten or 15 mile drive.

Each morning usually began with every- one meeting in the big tent for coffee, breakfast and a skippers' meeting. Breakfast consisted of blueberry pancakes, sausages, home fries or ham and egg sandwiches and was cooked outside by a local caterer on a large outdoor griddle. The skippers' meeting was run by *WoodenBoat* editor Tom Jackson. Most of the information was about the day's destination (which island we'd be sailing to) along with information about tides and expected weather conditions. After breakfast skippers and crews

headed down to Atlantic Boat Works and took one of the launches out to rig their boats and prepare for the day's sail.

Mid morning we would sail six to eight miles to one of the small islands offshore from Brooklin. Upon arriving at the island, we would pull up our boats on the sandy beach, enjoy lunch, do a little exploring and gener- ally mill around looking each others boats or renewing old friendships. Winds were gen- erally light in the morning with a brisk sea breeze springing up in the afternoon.

What made the sailing in this part of Maine so special? The scenery is beautiful and the fact that, other than the occasional lobster boat, there were no other boats out on the bay. On Saturday my brother Billy and I were sailing back from Pond Island, reaching along in a fresh, 12 knot breeze under sunny skies, when we came across a small power boat, the only pleasure boat we saw the entire day. As someone who typically sails in Bos- ton Harbor, it's hard to fathom being out in a boat on a Saturday afternoon in July and not see hundreds of other boats along with *Codzilla* and other harbor ferries. It was like going to small sailboat heaven.

Returning to the campground in the late afternoon we would shower and get ready for one of the delicious dinners cooked along- side the the big white tent. The highlight was Saturday night's lobster bake with steamers, mussels, corn on the cob and lobster.

It was a memorable mid summer adven- ture filled with beautiful boats, great sailing, sunny skies, lots of old friends, along with making some new ones.





## About Our Small Reach Regatta

In 2006 a group of sail and oars boats gathered for an informal cruise in Maine to answer a question, could we succeed here with a large gathering of such boats, inspired by "Raids" in Europe and by the famed Eggemoggin Reach Regatta for classic yachts? The reply was an enthusiastic "yes" and for the next three years like minded people sailed the same waters the ERR has sailed annually since 1985. This experience gave us our name, the Small Reach Regatta, and today we are organized entirely under the auspices of the Down East Chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association.

The vision of the SRR is to gather together small sail and oars boats for sailing with the same kind of camaraderie and appreciation that the ERR has established. The boats typically sail courses of five to 15 nautical miles on three successive days (Thursday through Saturday), starting from the waterfront anchorage each morning and returning each afternoon. There is no racing but participants always show keen interest in how their boats perform against others. Many of the boats were built of wood by their owners themselves and last year seven of them were even designed by their builders.

We don't have hard and fast rules about boat minimum or maximum lengths, knowing that the nature of traditional small craft is highly variable. The largest boat in the 2010 fleet was 22' and the smallest 13'. They ranged

from elegant yacht like constructions to boats inspired by workboats such as sailing dories. Generally the boats must be able to pull out on a beach and relaunch without assistance and must have oars as auxiliary propulsion.

Since those times on Eggemoggin Reach we've sailed three years out of Lamoine State Park on Frenchman Bay east of Mount Desert Island and two years out of the excellent Hog Island Audubon facilities in Muscongus Bay with as many as 55 boats in the fleet. The last two years we have been back in Brooklin, Maine, sailing in and around Blue Hill Bay and Eggemoggin Reach. Arrival, as usual, is Wednesday afternoon, with sailing Thursday, Friday and Saturday and departure Sunday. The fleet is based at Herrick Bay, thanks to the generosity of Cy Hannon, proprietor of Atlantic Boat. The yard has an excellent launching ramp, a good pier, quite a number of floats, ample space for trailer parking and frontage on a large anchorage.

The bay has excellent sailing access to Blue Hill Bay, Jericho Bay, Casco Passage, Eggemoggin Reach and potentially to the eastern part of the Deer Island Thoroughfare. For the event dates we've engaged the entire facility of a new campground in Brooklin called Oceanfront Camping at Reach Knolls, which is on Reach Road about six miles away from Atlantic Boat which can accommodate all of our participants.



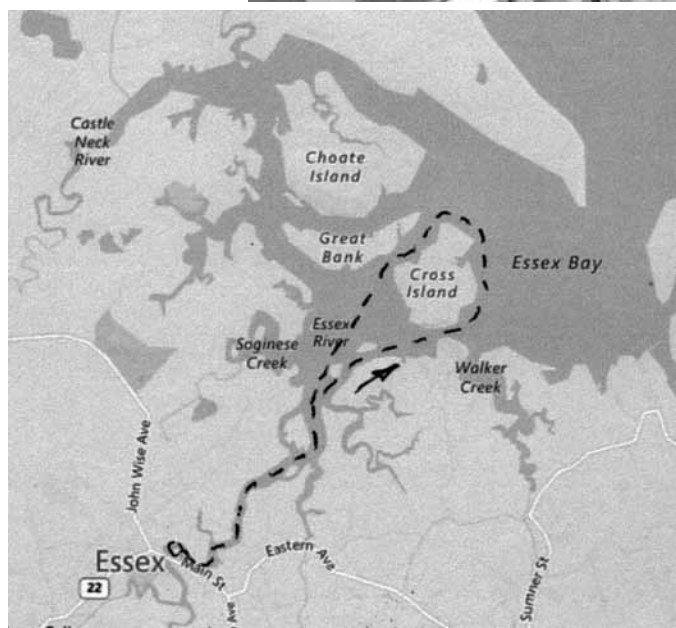


## The Essex River Race

By Richard Honan

A nice day on the water at the Essex River Race with brothers Bill and Steve. Bright sunny skies with temps in the high 50s made for perfect conditions. The race began in Essex, Massachusetts, across from the famous Woodmans Restaurant, goes down the Essex River, past Conomo Point, out towards the backside of Cranes Beach, around Cross Island and back up the Essex River for a total length of just short of six miles.

The stiff, 15 knot northeasterly headwind made for some challenging rowing on the first three mile leg to Cross Island. The same northeasterly wind aided us on the return trip up the Essex River. We finished the day at the CK Pearl Restaurant in Essex with a couple of local beers, some clam chowder and fried clams.





# Camp-cruising on Moosehead Lake

Dan Leonard

Maine is bigger than we than we thought, especially now that we've started driving inland from the coast. We're headed for Moosehead Lake, which is right about dead center in the vast Maine semi-wilderness.

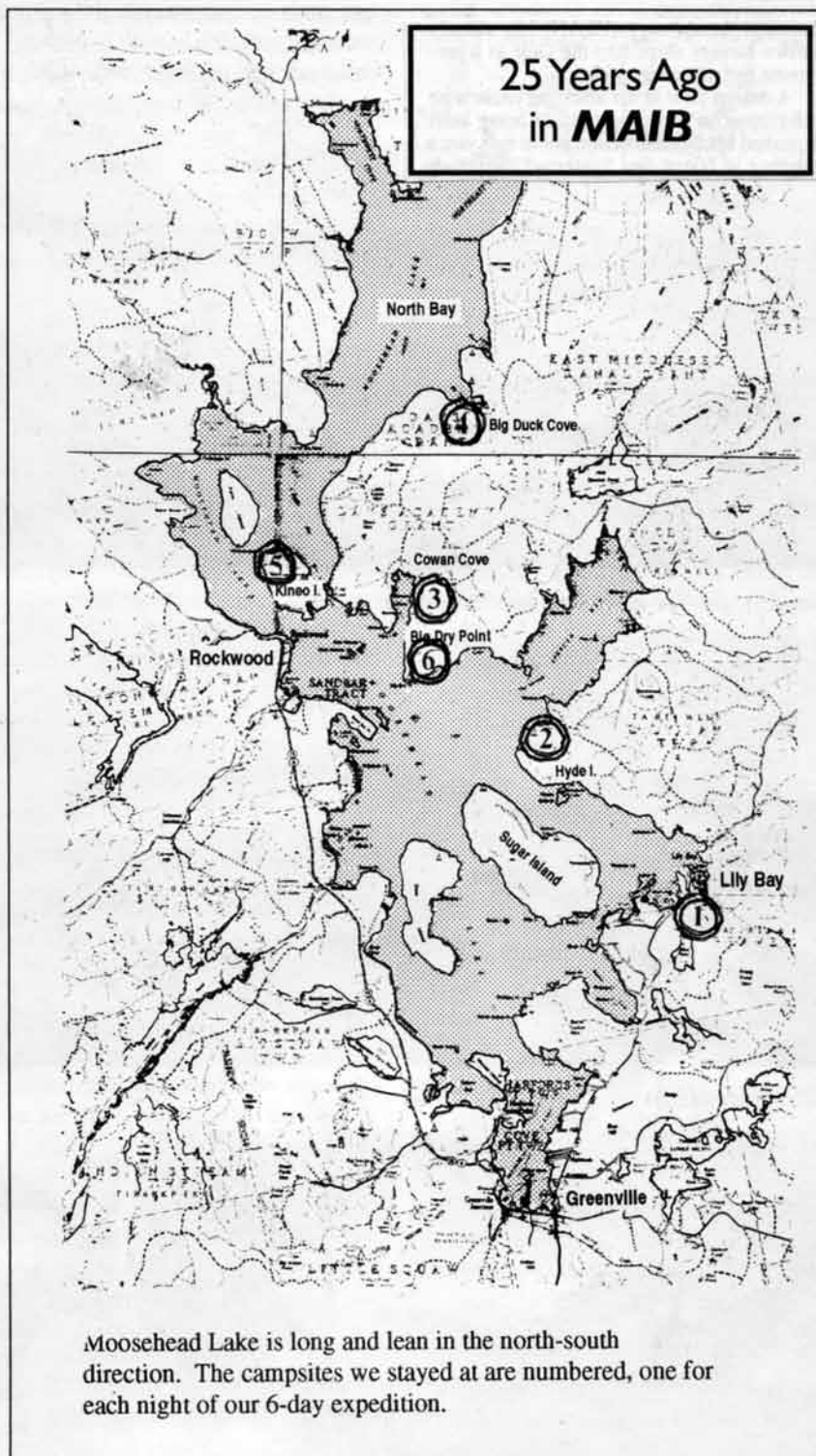
We've chosen Moosehead for several reasons. First of all, it's big, which should make for good cruising. Secondly, it's peppered all around with campsites, which should make for good camping.

We get our first glimpse of Moosehead from a high roadside overlook, and we're instantly taken with its inviting aspect. Under layers of luminous gray clouds, the lake recedes northward in a lovely tangle of inlets and coves, all silvery and shimmering. A loon's lonely wail drifts out over the water, and our expectations quietly ratchet up a notch or two. This lake looks like fun!

Our first stop is the Lily Bay State Campground, which we will use as a staging area. It's located just up the eastern shore from Greenville, which sits squarely at the southern tip of the lake and is the major supply center for the region. Even though it's a state campground, we get a wonderful wooded site, right on the water. Amazingly, there is virtually no boat traffic or campground noise. We might as well be 100 miles into the bush.

The entire area is heavily wooded, mostly with conifers. The ground and shoreline are liberally sprinkled with gravel, rocks and boulders of all sizes, and trees grow thickly right up to water's edge. Roots stick up everywhere through the soft forest floor, a thick mat of needles which gives way ever so slightly under foot, rebounding after. The ground is uneven, and full of surprises.

To the east, a continuous range of mountains pokes up into the overcast. Somewhere out that direction, 40 miles distant, is the great Mt. Katahdin, centerpiece of Baxter State Park. As we settle in for the evening, so too does a thin misting drizzle. All around us, loons weave their forlorn warbles into the gathering mist.



Next morning the air feels noticeably drier. The forecast is still somewhat unsettled, but we're anxious to load up and get out to one of the more remote campsites. Our plan is to stay out a few days. If we find a site we like, and the weather holds, we might stay longer. Or maybe we'll try

a few different sites. It all depends.

Down at the boat launch, it's already getting hot. We lock up the car, and split a specially-reserved, ice-cold beer. There's a feeling of anticipation as we paddle noiselessly away from the campground. It's the last real civilization we expect to see

for a while, and it feels great to be leaving it behind. Although our planned excursion will hardly be a wilderness expedition, we're both excited.

Our home base for the next few days will be our boat, which is a big two-man sailing kayak. It's a rigid wooden model, with plenty of stowage, and it feels rock-solid with

the full load.

There's almost no wind, but we're in no hurry, so we settle back for a dreamy ride. Occasionally, when the wind dies altogether, we get out the paddles, but we much prefer sailing. The reason, I suppose is part laziness. Why work when you'll get there anyway? More than that, however, sailing leaves you pretty free to sit back and look around.

We're doing perhaps one mile an hour on the merest whisper of a breeze. I leave my sail cleated down and steer with my feet, which leaves both hands free for other things -- like taking pictures. I alternate between a little grab-shoot camera and our new 8mm video. This is the first time we've brought the video in the boat, and I'm pleased to discover how easy it is to shoot one-handed, as we sail.

Up in the front cockpit, my wife Hedda is lost in space. Normally she sails the jib, but with things this slow, she's got her sail cleated down too. After a bit, she begins reading.

Hedda often brings books on our trips. Some are for her own pleasure, but this one is for reading aloud. As we make our way slowly uplake, we learn about a small group of Inuit Indians and the rigors of hunting walrus and seal from skin kayaks.

Once clear of the point, the wind begins to fill in, and we've got steady sailing at last. By mid-afternoon we're past Hyde Island, and searching for the first of the campsites. Even with our binoculars, however, neither of us can find a break in the trees along the bank.

By now we realize we're beyond the area where the camp should be. No matter, there are plenty of other sites further along, and we've still got several hours of daylight.

We emerge from the passage alongside Sugar Island, and suddenly the lake is much bigger. The wind is bigger, too, and we're moving along effortlessly, now. The clouds are still three layers deep, but we note isolated patches of blue emerging here and there from the sea of gray billows.

We're clipping right along, and I can't resist pulling out the video every few minutes. My theory is simple:



*Our first glimpse of the lake ratchets up our expectations a notch or two.*



*Morning mists hover on Big Duck Cove*





take enough pictures, and sooner or later you're bound to get something you like.

High above, there's the lazy drone of a seaplane (or float plane, as it's known), the first of many we will see. The further north you get in Maine, the more abundant they become. Plenty of spots for landing, with all the lakes.

Now that our field of vision has widened, we start to get an idea of just how big this lake really is. Surprisingly, however, there are no other boats in sight. Even though it's mid-week, we expect to see a canoe or two, or perhaps a sailboat. Nothing.

Rounding the headland, we scout for the next campsite as the afternoon slips away. We don't see any. Perhaps they've *all* disappeared? Ought to see something pretty soon ... Ha! There's one, and it looks great! We pull up onto a small gravel beach, and hop out eagerly to inspect our first site.

It's quite small, but furnished with the basics -- a weathered picnic table, a small open area at water's edge, a stone-lined fire pit, and a spot between the trees just big enough for our two-man tent. Clearly, this site is meant for small parties like ours.

We unload half our gear, and then strip down for a cooling dip in the lake. Perfection. The water is clear and delightful, just the right temperature for hot bodies. As we swim, it suddenly hits. We're finally *out there*. We've got our own private little home in the woods, on the water, and our schedule is open for the next several days.

Drying off, we set out the camp chairs to admire the approaching sundown. Camp chairs? Okay, it's a bit stupid, but they fit in the bottom of the cockpit, and you can't always count on a handy driftwood log.

The sunset show is perfect, as we sip a little Mr. Jack and settle back. Across the way is a high, flat-topped island that we will come to know much better in the coming days. Far away to the northeast is Katahdin's mile-high hump. While Hedda writes in her journal, I trace our route for the day, and figure we've done about 8 miles. Things are getting pretty mellow in the molten glow of the sun,

when suddenly there's a motor approaching, and pretty fast. We can't see anything around the point, and now it sounds like a truck is charging straight out of the woods at us.

I run for the camera, but too late! I miss a great shot as a float plane roars directly over our site, close enough to touch. It's a deHavilland Beaver, one of the great old bush planes that are still to be found up here. Two canoes are lashed to the struts.

As the hum of the Beaver's powerful radial engine recedes into the distance, I realize it's time to get this campsite humming. While I set up the tent, Hedda inflates the air mattress. Foam pads are a lot better than the cold ground, but we just don't get a good night's sleep on pads, so we always pack the air mattress. And the foot pump.

I've also abandoned my earlier belief that down is the only thing for camping. Down is wonderfully light, and packs down to nothing, but I just sleep better in the old-fashioned flannel-lined bags with the bulky batting. They take up a bit too much room in the boat, but the extra comfort is worth the extra bother.

We're running a little late, by now, so dinner is pasta with olive oil and Feta cheese crumbled over the top -- a great combination that cooks up quickly in one pot. No tomato sauce, no mess.

Next morning we know instantly we've hit the jackpot. The weather is now GREAT! The morning sun has none of that haziness that comes with humidity. The air is dry and the sun is set in pure, deep blue. This is what we came for!

Our morning ritual is simple. The first order of business is to make coffee, drip style, directly into our stainless thermos. That way we can enjoy it in little bits throughout the morning, and it stays piping hot. We take an extra moment to pre-heat our mugs with hot water straight off the stove before pouring in the coffee.

Before breakfast, we head into the water for a "polar bear" dip. The water now feels deliciously cool, and we're instantly awake and vitalized. Swimming energetically to get the blood going, we admire our new

home. Whichever way we look, the lake appears wonderfully inviting.

Towel off, we get the oatmeal going and pour out a half-glass of ice-cold orange juice. Our ice will only last a couple of days, so this is a treat for the beginning of the trip. As far as we're concerned, treats are an essential ingredient of camp life. It's amazing how much you appreciate the little things when you've cut yourself free from the instant gratification that's available at home.

For instance, we always bring raisins for the oatmeal, and brown sugar and butter, and maple syrup in a little jar for the pancakes, and several small plastic squeeze bottles with our favorite dressings to make fresh vegetables and salads more appetizing. It all helps.

After breakfast, we talk about the day ahead. We love our site, but the weather is so fine we decide to load up and push a bit farther north, to extend our range. The sun is high when we finally get on the water.

We sail over to Ronco Cove on the gentle morning breeze to check out some other campsites. Nothing special, so we head on towards a site on Big Dry Point, which overlooks the central portion of the lake, and promises a fine three-sided view.

Along the way, we are unable to locate some of the campsites marked on our map, while new ones seem to have sprung up in places where the map shows nothing. Later on we will learn that the state has stopped maintaining the campsites, due to recent budget cutbacks.

Meanwhile, the wind has died away completely, so we pull out the paddles. One nice feature about our rig is that it doesn't interfere at all with paddling. We just furl the jib and cleat down the main with the boom centered overhead.

Even with the full load, the paddling is great. The sun is sparkling off the water and we feel like we're in a dream. Tan lines are already beginning to form, and Hedda has changed to a halter top.

We stop paddling for a bit to have our sandwiches and fruit. The lake is glassy, and absolutely still. Perfect time for a cool-down dip, so we pull into the campsite just ahead

and take an extended, leisurely swim.

As we're bobbing quietly in the water, three loons glide around the point and swim by within a few yards. We hold our breath. Normally, loons give humans a wide berth, diving under whenever you try to get close for a good look.

Back in the boat, we push on to Big Dry Point but are greatly disappointed to find that it has apparently become private property. Too bad! Out past the point, we get a good view of Kineo Island, the big flat-topped hump which dominates the center of the lake. It doesn't look very imposing from this distance, but I can just start to make out its sheer rock

cliff, commanding the entire area.

It's already mid-afternoon, so we decide to head down nearby Cowan Cove and take a look at the campsites there. As we enter the cove, we pass close by a charming little house snuggled onto a tiny island crowded with boulders and a few trees. The house seems to lean against a huge, smooth rock which is very nearly as big as the house.

We're running down the cove, with the wind behind us for the first time. This is the easy life. We cleat down all the sails and settle back for the ride. Halfway down, a campsite looks inviting, and we pull up onto its little gravel beach. In the full

afternoon sun, it looks perfect!

Upon inspection, the site proves to be perfect indeed. Perfect table, perfect tent site, perfect view in every direction. Even the privy up the path out back is perfect. And, of course, the swim is perfect. Having spent the entire day under the brilliant sun, on sparkling water, everything appears a little larger than life.

As we unpack, I notice that the boat is already starting to get that casual, lived-in look. T-shirts are drying on the boom, while binoculars, books, cameras, water bottles, sunblock and other miscellany have begun to take up more or less permanent residence in various locations about the cockpits.

Almost unnoticed, clouds have started moving in again. These are a bit different, however, with that dramatic look that promises an interesting evening. Set against the salmon-colored backlighting of the setting sun, these are billowing giants.

I suddenly realize that we're looking at classic thunderheads during their building stage -- low, flat bottoms with towering structures rising straight up for thousands of feet. Way off in the distance, we hear rumbling.

It looks like an hour or two before the show really starts, so we get out our little camping grill and start barbecuing the chicken. We pack our chicken frozen, so it helps keep our remaining food cool while it slowly defrosts. It's usually ready to eat the second day out. We do the same trick with the steak, which will keep quite well until the third or fourth day.

I bring one of those collapsible metal chimneys to start the charcoal. They're quick and virtually foolproof, and don't require starter fluid. I use a miniature bottle of taco sauce, medium-hot, to baste the chicken, and it's finger-lickin' good. Fresh spinach and potato salad round out the meal.

The cloud show is spectacular by now, so we decide to paddle out to the center of the cove to watch things develop. This turns out to be a great idea. Somehow, the storm never materializes, and we stay out until it is quite dark.

During the night, we have our first and only trouble with bugs. So



*Hedda "hikes out" in a moderate breeze.*



*The large upright bags in the cockpits contain our bulky sleeping bags. The camp chairs stow in the bottom of the forward cockpit while smaller personal items are stashed in the cockpit bins. Everything else fits in the sealed cargo compartments fore and aft, or under the bungees.*



far they've been no problem, but we're a bit slow in zipping up the tent after our evening adventure. We spend the night combating a swarm of no-see-ums that have been lurking in ambush. They win.

Morning breaks bright and early, without a trace of the cloud cover which was so thick the night before. The lake is glassy, the air invigorating. After our morning swim, we weigh our options. On one hand, we like our spot. On the other, it's now Saturday morning, which means Weekend.

Already, we've noticed a small clump of Winnebagos collecting on the opposite shore at the "permit" site. Someone's generator is whining away mindlessly. That settles it. We break camp.

As we're beginning to find, it's really no big deal to be packing up and unpacking each day. It takes a good hour and a half at each end, but there always seems to be plenty of time.

The morning is half gone as we shove off. It's beautifully calm, so we paddle up the cove away from the Winnebagos, and then drift a while with a fresh mug of coffee. We indulge in story hour, and learn a bit more about the kayaks of Greenland.

By now it's noon, and time for "hardbread" and cheese. I always bake up a loaf of this stuff for camping trips. Made with whole grain flours and raisins, but no leavening, it's dense and heavy, and lasts all week without cooling. With a slab of yellow cheddar on top, it makes a hearty lunch unlike anything we would have at home. Another treat.

The wind has come up, so we stow paddles and begin tacking up towards Kineo Island. We can just make out what looks to be an old hotel of sorts, all broken-down looking and in need of paint. Towering high above the hotel is the sheer rock face of Mt. Kineo. At this range, it's quite impressive.

The weather is stunning, and we start to think of extending our trip for a few days. The town of Rockwood is just a few miles distant, over on the western shore, so we decide to shoot over and try to find a store where we can freshen our supplies. More ice would be nice.

I scan the shore for some kind of

marina or market, but there doesn't seem to be any. Slightly disappointed, we swing east and begin heading for the campsite at the far northern tip of Kineo. With the wind is behind us, we're making great time, scooting by within yards of the shore. I'm taking pictures at a great rate.

It's late afternoon, by now, and the sun is *intense*. We've got towels stretched across our legs, and wet T-shirts draped over our heads, covering the backs of our necks. Hedda looks like some kind of desert nomad, with her T-shirt turban stuffed under her sun visor.

Coming up on the campsite, our hearts sink. It's occupied. Looking around, we start catching on to what's happening. A steady flow of powerboats is pouring out of Rockwood, loaded with weekend warriors. Suddenly, we're in hostile territory.

Worse still, it's getting on into the afternoon, and we're a long way from the next campsite area. The wind is also dropping back a notch or two, and we're no longer zooming.

We watch helplessly as we're overtaken by a succession of plodding houseboats, all apparently heading the same place we're going. We pass another cluster of full campsites and realize we may have to sail all the way up to Big Duck Cove. It's turning into a race for the remaining campsites, and we're losing.

I'm definitely worried, now. The afternoon is nearly gone, and for the first time we have to think about making a camp wherever we can. The shoreline is not encouraging. It will be difficult to find a site where we can pull up the boat.

The sun is setting as we swing at last into Big Duck Cove, paddling under the sails in an effort to speed things up. We see power boats arrayed all around the cove, with bonfires already blazing. Kids are splashing around the family sites, having a great time. Other sites boast a whole cluster of sleek muscle boats, and seem to be overflowing with teenagers.

Miraculously, the lone site on the southern shore is vacant! We lunge for it and shout out loud. Ha! We've got a campsite! It's a bit overgrown,

but the view from the privy up the hill is almost magical, and completely private.

I start the grill and we go for a celebration swim. After the long exposure to the brilliant sun, we've got incipient sunstroke, and we plunge into the water like starving seals. We've spent a good ten hours in the boat, traveling 15 miles.

The steak we have been looking forward to is stringy and tasteless, but we're happy to be home. The sky looks a bit unsettled, and I suspect we may get a shower before daybreak. I set up the tarp over the picnic table, in case we have to cook breakfast in the rain.

The morning breaks cool, misty and quiet, as the partymakers across the cove are still apparently sleeping it off. It looks like a scene from the Scottish highlands. A string of baby ducklings paddle by, trailing their mother like beads on a string.

We're looking out across North Bay, which is the northernmost section of the lake. Our block ice is finally gone, however, and supplies are running low. Looks like a good time to turn around and start heading home. We finish off the last of the pancakes for breakfast and break camp.

It's a lovely Sunday morning. The other boaters are just beginning to stir as we paddle out of the cove to pick up a light morning breeze. By mid-morning there's lots of powerboat traffic, especially around Kineo Island, which acts like a magnet. Amazing! The boaters are zooming round and round the island at full power, like idiots! Once around, twice around ...

There's also lots of traffic going back and forth from Rockwood. We haven't seen a single sailboat, and only one canoe. Pontoon boats, however, abound. Right now, our best shot for camping would be the sites at the northern tip of Kineo, which were full the day before. We hope someone will have to get to work early Monday morning, and will leave this afternoon.

After lunch, the wind thins out to occasional, fitful wisps, and we pull out the paddles for the final two miles to the campsite, which still looks full. We go in closer, however, and find that it's actually a cluster of sites, all bunched together. One of them is



vacant, and we grab it.

We set up camp, but realize that with our dwindling supplies, dinner is going to be a little thin. Hedda suggests we try for Kineo House, a small restaurant at the other end of the island which services the resort. She remembers seeing an advertisement somewhere about dinner specials. Sounds great.

It's already nearly 6:00, so we've got to hustle. Unfortunately, the wind is dead on the nose. We alternately paddle and sail, getting ever more anxious about missing dinner. Finally, with the sun setting, we round the smart new boathouse on the point and paddle into the dock area. Quickly tying up, we dash across the golf course (wow, look at that, a golf course!) and run up to Kineo House.

It's closed. No Sunday dinner. Well, that's pretty disappointing, but we salvage the evening by taking the opportunity to inspect the old hotel. An information board yields a bit of Kineo's history.

Apparently, the existing hotel is a sad remnant of the grand days of the previous century, when the well-to-do flocked here for fine food, good country air and the famous cliffwalk overlooking Moosehead. The old hotel burned down, however, and was eventually replaced with this sorry-looking affair, which although quite large has little decorative detail.

Still, the site itself retains its natural appeal. Developers have recently turned it into an upscale resort of sorts, with lots of cottages and additional building sites for sale. The golf course is in prime condition, and the refurbished dock area, which used to accommodate big lake steamers, still services tourist boats from the mainland.

We climb back in our boat and head back to camp. The wind is behind us this time, and we're rewarded with a wonderful moonlight

cruise as we glide effortlessly back up the island. It's quite dark when we finally round the point at our campsite, but the rocks are clearly visible in the moonlight, and we have no difficulty getting ashore. It's 9:30, and we've logged a good 17 miles.

Our next-door neighbor is a retired mechanical engineer with his son-in-law. He lives on Cape Cod, and has been coming here for something like 30 years. On the beach is his 20-ft Old Town canoe, with a small outboard. We talk about the lake. "Not like it used to be," he says. "You've pretty much got to go to Canada, now. Can't find that kind of thing here anymore."

Next morning, we swim and break camp. We're beginning to get the routine, and are on the water by 9:30 -- our earliest start yet. By mid-morning the wind is up nicely, and Hedda is having a great time out on the hikeout seat as we reach back and forth between Rockwood and Kineo.

The hikeout seat, by the way, is a wonderful thing. In any kind of sailboat it's important to get the crew weight up to the windward side of the boat as it breezes up, to help counteract the forces tending to heel the boat over on its side. In a narrow boat like ours, it's essential.

In the beginning, Hedda was reluctant to get out of the security of the cockpit to go sit out on the hikeout seat. Now, however, she jumps up at the first opportunity. Having her weight up there really steadies up the boat, and besides that, it's fun. With the jib sheet in your hand, you can lean way back, almost like a windsurfer.

That's what she's doing right now. The wind is strong but steady, and she's practicing what we call "maxi-hike" -- leaning back almost touching the water. I've got the camera out recording all this as we scream along at full speed. Total excitement.

By now it's blowing 10-15 knots, which is a pretty good breeze. We furl up the #2 sail, and continue on with just the jib and main. We're surrounded by whitecaps, and can't point as high into the wind as we'd like, due to the increased windage on the hull and the action of the waves.

We're zigzagging back and forth, making long shallow tacks, but not much real progress.

Finally, by late afternoon we make it past Big Dry Point. Now we can fall off a bit and pick up some real speed. As we approach our campsite, we're charging along at full tilt, doing something like 6 mph. In a small boat like ours, it feels like 60.

The site looks familiar, and we realize this is where we stopped on the way out, when we swam with the loons. It's a beautiful site, and we're glad to be back, especially since we're partially out of the wind. In front of us, the lake is whipped into a fury. Studying the map, I see we've sailed 16 miles in order to make 8, due to all the zigzagging.

It's 5:00, and we rummage around looking for food. Clearly, this is going to be our last real meal. We savor it in the waning sun, and are soon greeted by the rising moon, which is exactly full tonight.

Next morning we awake to full, glorious sunshine. It's still blowing hard, however, and still right in our face. Another beat! Our food is basically gone, and we're down to our last water bottle. Although it's a long way back to Lily Bay, we're going to have to try and make it.

Out on the water, it's pretty much the same as yesterday -- long shallow tacks upwind. We've got a good early start, however, and make steady progress. The chop doesn't seem quite so bad. Finally, around 5:00, we see the campgrounds dead ahead, and a late wind shift allows us to come charging by the outer campsites with everything flying.

What an intense day! I've had a low-grade headache all afternoon (too much sun!), and I'm ready to dive headfirst into the cooler which we left in the car. Of course, it's no longer cool. We celebrate anyway, and then head into town to blow it all off.

In town, we read the bronze plaque detailing Henry David Thoreau's whirlwind visit to Moosehead in the 1800's. He hired a guide to paddle, and they covered the entire length of the lake, up and back including hiking Mt. Kineo, in just two days. It took us six. Hats off, guys.





## Moosehead Lake

Moosehead Lake is the largest lake in the state of Maine and the largest mountain lake in the eastern United States. Situated in the Longfellow Mountains in the Maine Highlands Region, the lake is the source of the Kennebec River. Towns that border the lake include Greenville to the south and Rockwood to the northwest. There are over 80 islands in the lake, the largest being Sugar Island.

### History

Mount Kineo, with 700' (200m) cliffs rising straight up from Moosehead Lake, has attracted visitors for centuries, from early American Indians (Red Paint People) to later tribes seeking its flint called hornstone, Penobscots and Norridgewocks, the Abenaki bands who battled here with their enemy the Mohawks, to 19th century "rusticators" traveling by railroad and steamboat and today's hotel guests. Various species dwell among its cliffs and talus slopes, including peregrine falcons and rare plants.

The Moosehead region includes the headwaters of the Kennebec, the West Branch of the Penobscot, the Piscataquis, the Pleasant and the Saint John rivers. Henry David Thoreau and other 19th century visitors remarked on the beauty of the area. The region has a large moose population, moose outnumber people 3:1. However, the name of the region derives from the remarkable similarity between maps of the lake and an antlered moose.

No stranger to the natural wonders of the region, Henry David Thoreau described the lake as "...a gleaming silver platter at the end of the table."

### Geography

Set at an elevation of 1,023' (312m), Moosehead Lake is approximately 40x10 miles (64x16 km) with an area of 120 mile (311km), and over 400 miles (640km) of shoreline. Its major inlet is the Moose River which, east of Jackman, flows through Long Pond to Brassua Lake. To the east of Moosehead Lake the Roach River is its second largest tributary. Flowing out of Moosehead Lake to the southwest are its east and west outlets, the Kennebec River.

The Moosehead Lake Region encompasses 4,400 square miles (11,000km) of West Central Maine and includes 127 townships in addition to Moosehead Lake. The region is drained by 330 miles (530km) of main stem rivers into which flow 3,850 miles (6,200km) of smaller tributaries. During the last glacial era, more than 1,200 natural lakes and ponds were carved into its landscape,

varying in size from one acre (4,000m) ponds to Moosehead, at 74,890 acres (303km) one of the largest natural freshwater lakes in the United States. The total area of all standing surface waters in the region is more than 238,000 acres (963km), 24% of the total area of lakes and ponds in Maine.



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Vacation trips happen for many reasons, maybe reunion with friends or relatives, or sometimes just a nap on the beach without being interrupted by the cares of the world. We generally go away to find relaxation and solitude, making an effort to find it in a place of natural beauty. We have done a lot of that. Sometimes the cost of access has been high including distance travelled, traffic, occasional adverse weather, especially after we arrived, and other surprises.

Planning the trip is part of the enjoyment with the anticipation of fair skies, low humidity and light winds if it is to be a canoe trip, which it often has been, but Nature's plans seldom match up with ours. Flexibility is required, for surprises both pleasant and unpleasant will happen.

As I recall our vacation travels I tend to remember fondly the good times, allowing the memory of the troubles along the way to become a bit dimmer. This is especially true of our camping trips. While travel trouble is not unique to camping, it seems that there is more opportunity for the unexpected and often unpleasant episode and fewer options when it happens, often no way out. It's nicer to remember the good times and this selective memory tendency is probably the reason we kept returning to Canada, usually Killarney Park or the Adirondacks of New York, camping by canoe.

We had some of the best camping ever in those places with fine weather in beautiful surroundings. But then there were the times of high winds and rain, my kidney stone attack when we were five hours and two portages away from the car, the time when I sat in an island campsite eating my birthday pudding in June in freezing weather wearing every shirt, sweater and jacket I had, waking up to ice on the tent in early September, mosquitoes as big as birds or black flies so bad it made us both sick. The list could go on. But of course we kept at it because the bad times were few and the pleasures were many and those times I remember well.

So it was that we were heading to Canada again, not directly to Killarney this time but we would eventually make it there. We began in Michigan, stopping for our favorite Cornish pasties just north of the big bridge and continuing on to take advantage of pleasant camping for the night at Brevort Lake. The next day we crossed into Canada and set up camp in Lake Superior Provincial Park in Ontario on a pretty site right near the water. Waves were lapping on the stony beach in front of the tent and crashing against the rocky headland not far away

Lake Superior Provincial Park.



## Fish Fry Weekend

By Hugh Groth

It was one of the few times I was not able to find high enough ground for the tent to suit me but the weather was fair so why worry? That night the clouds opened up and it poured rain, flooding the tent and driving us into the van for the rest of the night, but tents do dry and this was only a minor hiccup in an otherwise good stop. In the morning we toured the pictographs on the shore cliffs.

With no more mishaps we made it to beautiful Pukaskwa National Park (pronounced Puck-a-saw) on the north shore of Lake Superior, spending two days canoeing the inlets and relaxing. The rocky points of land and the log strewn beach at Pukaskwa are very unusual, a bit like the coastal areas of Olympic National Park in the west, even to the way the fog suddenly enveloped us as we walked along the rocky shore. Finally it was time to start the long drive to Killarney, camping along the way at the Shoals Provincial Park in central Ontario, a nice campground with a small lake that did not permit motors, good for canoeing but rather ordinary.

Killarney Lake had no sites available this time but we had heard that secluded Ruth Roy Lake was also beautiful, and it had only two sites total so we would have lots of privacy. We checked in at the main campground and drove to the remote launch site and parking area on Johnny Lake where we were to start.

The launch area was a gently sloping beach so we easily loaded our gear, parked the van and shoved off. About 100 yards out I suddenly remembered I had left all our spare cash in the van. Although it was well hidden, leaving it was not a good idea so we went back, retrieved the cash and started again, paddling into sunshine and calm winds. About halfway down Johnny we doubled back west into Crooked Lake and eventually found our portage to Ruth Roy. It was a bit of a rocky landing, but not bad, and the portage was only about a quarter of a mile long and level.

At the Ruth Roy end of the portage we got one of those unpleasant surprises. We came out onto a rock ledge probably over 4' above the water, a vertical drop down to and into the obviously deep lake. There was no way to get on the lake but to lower the canoe to the water, then somehow get ourselves and our gear into it. Slowly and carefully we got the job done without losing anything, but we worried about the return trip, especially if there were an emergency. We already had experience with that sort of thing and were not eager for more.

Pukaskwa National Park.



The weather was good and we soon found a nice campsite part way down the lake. Here, too, the view was of white quartzite mountains jutting up from the water, the shore lined with birch and spruce, but without the long vistas of Killarney Lake or OSA Lake. Our site was low and close to the water with an easy landing. It was tucked up against a huge rock, easily climbed via the hill behind with an even better view from the top, and the top was covered in blueberry bushes with ripe berries.



Picking blueberries atop the big rock.

Ruth Roy is a small lake, a little over 2km long by 1/2km wide so it does not take much to thoroughly explore the whole thing. The one other campsite was empty so we saw no one for days with Ruth Roy not on any route to other lakes in the interior. Picking blueberries became the major activity and we had berries for breakfast, lunch and dinner, maybe not the best idea but it did not cause any trouble. We did some sketching and reading, but mostly we sat on the big rock and looked at the scenery, which is nice but it gets a bit lonely after a while. The ravens talking among themselves, the plaintive white-throated sparrows and the haunting call of the loons let us know we had found solitude, lots of it.



Ruth Roy Lake from the rock.



Killarney Provincial Park.

We had a few nice days, no emergencies and generally good weather, and then it was time to head home. We packed up and clambered back over the little cliff with only a few scrapes and bruises, nothing lost, traversed the portage and paddled back through Crooked Lake and Johnny Lake to the landing.

At the van there was another surprise for us. The passenger's side window was covered with a black plastic bag with a note from Ontario Provincial Police attached. It seems our car had been broken into, the win-

dow smashed. The note said we were to go back to the main campground and contact the police in the village. I opened up the van and checked it over. Nothing appeared to be missing except that there were two different flashlights on the back seat floor. We had left two flashlights there but these were different and ours were nowhere to be found. I was very glad I had gone back for our spare cash as we left.

We learned that we were camping during Fish Fry Weekend in the town of Killar-

ney, generally a right rowdy time with drinking apparently the main attraction. At some point some jolly fellows had decided to have some "fun." They had broken into 32 cars at the various park interior access points, not stealing anything, just moving stuff from one car to another as they went.

We spent a night in Sudbury, toured Science North and got the window repaired in the morning, then headed home. No more trouble.



Killarney Provincial Park is a provincial park in central Ontario, Canada. Although not as well known as the world famous Algonquin Provincial Park, Killarney is one of Ontario's most popular wilderness destinations. With its sapphire blue lakes and white quartzite ridges it is considered one of the crown jewels of the Ontario Park system.

The park contains just one campground at the George Lake entrance as it is primarily a wilderness park. There are few facilities to allow visitors a chance to experience the solitude and beauty of its undisturbed natural setting. It boasts spectacular hiking trails and canoe in back country camping. The canoe routes include well maintained portages between lakes. The campground includes six heated yurts which have electric lighting, a power outlet, a propane barbecue and bunk beds.

Situated on the north shore of Georgian Bay in the municipality of Killarney, the park straddles the La Cloche range, large rounded white quartzite hills that dominate the landscape. The white peaks and cliffs contrast with the pine and hardwood forests and the boggy lowlands that surround the park's many lakes. Quartzite is weather resistant and contains few nutrient bearing minerals. Soils, where present, tend to be shallow and infertile. Very stony sandy loam is the most common soil texture reported. Podzol profile development is usual in well drained situations. Mineral rich rock types such as diabase and limestone occur locally and the soils that have developed over them support some of the park's more luxuriant vegetation.

## Killarney Provincial Park

The park lies within the eastern forest boreal transition ecoregion, so there is a wide variety of plant life. The park is home to moose, deer, black bears, wolves, bobcats, martens and beavers along with over 20 species of reptiles and amphibians. Over 100 species of birds breed, nest or rest within park boundaries.

### Origin

The origin of the park is owed to the conservation efforts of artists. Canadian Group of Seven artist A.Y. Jackson was so alarmed by the prospect that Trout Lake (now O.S.A. Lake) was about to be logged that he petitioned the Provincial government of the day to have it preserved. His letter was received by William Finlayson, then the Minister of Lands and Forests, resulting in a successful conclusion. The lake was taken into trust by the Ontario Society of Artists and its name was changed to O.S.A. Lake. Jackson's efforts were rewarded with the naming of a lake after him on his 90th birthday.

The hills and lakes in the Killarney area became a popular place for painting and sketching and over the years several other members of the Group of Seven worked there including Franklin Carmichael, Arthur Lismer and A.J. Casson. In 1959 the Killarney Park area was set aside as a wilderness preserve. In 1962 Highway 637 opened, connecting the north shore of Georgian Bay all the way from the town of Killarney to the Trans-Canada Highway. Finally in 1964, with

the help of lobbying efforts by the Group of Seven, 4,000 square miles (10,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of Georgian Bay shoreline were set aside as a wilderness reserve, and Killarney became a provincial park.

The park has experienced some challenges that threaten the health of its delicate local ecosystems. Owing in large part to its proximity to Sudbury with its nickel mines and smelters, local lakes were damaged by acid rain. Pollution caused by the smelting activities associated with nickel mining between the 1940s and the 1970s, caused many of Killarney's lakes to become acidified, resulting in the loss of fish species, algae and aquatic plant life in many of the lakes. This damage was especially severe in the quartzite areas.

Legislation passed in the 1970s forced the industry to improve its emissions standards. Since then, sulphur emissions have been reduced by over 90%. To date, water quality has improved in some lakes to pre pollution levels while in other lakes the slow process of biological recovery continues. More recently the lakes have been under threat from non indigenous invasive species such as the *Bythotrephes longimanus* (aka spiny water flea) which threaten local species.

In 2006 the provincial government also created the adjacent but separate provincial park of Killarney Lakelands and Headwaters. In 2015 the Wikwemikong First Nation on Manitoulin Island also established the adjacent Point Grondine Park on their own unoccupied heritage territory in the area.

## Sickness

I just may name my next boat that, sickness. This thought occurred while laying about with the real thing. This particular trial started probably when I was the tender age of 14, the year I avidly started surfing. They say skin cancer goes way back. Well, about a week and a half ago my nose was shortened because of that very thing, good old sunshine and plenty of it.

This latest sojourn to the dermatologist has kept me local instead of sailing with the boys on the Texas 200. I didn't think I could give it the care it needs, two or three times daily, out floating down or up the ICW.

Then the cold came, making it interesting yet more. Now it's in the lungs and leaving the doc's with antibodies and an inhaler I've turned the corner. Why just this morning I uncovered the *Summer Breeze* from where she's been hiding and suffering from neglect. Having got that done just as Harry showed up, we set a spell. That was it for today. No sense pushing it.



That's part of the sickness as well, going outside, doing boat stuff, even just a little, while still coughing and hacking, it's downright incurable. If one of my boats ends up with the name *Sickness* across her transom the ones who, after reading this, shake their head knowingly, I will know they've got the affliction as well, they'll know.

They'll be many reading this knowingly, no need for the wife's second opinion, maybe a good idea not to let her read this drivel anyway. Safer for all concerned. When this small boat bug bites, it bites hard, leaves a mark never to heal.

I've a friend in the northern reaches of Canada, a retired college professor. He used to putter around with a small sailboat but not anymore. He's got four small sailboats, came up with a design of his own, *Gorfnick*, helps others with their builds, offers plans for free and sails in the snow and ice to the tip of Florida wherever he trailers to.

My suggestion, stay away from what I'm trying to kick and get what my lovely wife endures.

## Three Times

Three times I've taken the 12 out this past week, maybe four. That'll be it for the week. I don't normally sail on Sunday unless, of course, I do.

On one of the sails, just off the island in front of Cove Harbour, I was on the bay side and a small trimaran snuck up on me. Didn't even know he was there. Quiet and fast. I was poking along laying down on the leeward side.

I cut two small ports on the cabin front for this very purpose. I can see ahead pretty good and off downwind, but not upwind. So this guy was a surprise. I went and anchored off the island and waded ashore, walked

## Meanderings Along the Texas Coast

By Michael Beebe

around a bit. Followed the pig tracks, found a wallow of theirs, some rooting areas.

I've been scouting out places to both overnight and to be able to gig for flounder with the wife. I've found several locals so far that should be very productive. Time will tell.

Work is progressing on the redone Lightning as well and in the midst of all this I located a Hobie 16 mast that I went and got, only to realize it's a bit more than I want to deal with. I had planned on using it on the Lightning as its mast has two bends in it. I'd have to use a gin pole setup and now that I've been spoiled with lug rigs and stick the mast in the hole and go, a gin pole to me seems to be going backward.

So the Lightning will soon be a go as a lugger. If anyone remembers I yanked out the centerboard and case, added leeboards, cabin sides with windows both sides and front. Hardtop is coming, I also cut out the swept back foredeck, squaring it, created our very own dance floor.

I cut down a big genoa, sewed by hand the entire thing, two reefs, a new lug for the Lightning. The mast I am using for her is an old RV boom. A month ago I had it sailing with the mast stayed and using measures for the boom and yard I got from Chuck, it worked but just too heavy. It worked good actually so this past week I built a new tabernacle of wood for the RV mast, stayless, keeping my fingers crossed.

I lucked out again and seem to have got the balance right. A friend came by and mentioned I wouldn't know if it was fast or not, not having ever sailed a Lightning before and none being local to compare it with, no big deal. I like his attitude, he had an 18' Pelican here on the coast for 40 years. He's an interesting fellow to talk with and shoot the breeze.

I've an apology to make, there'll be no more pictures for a while, my iPad froze up so no go. Have to use the old imagination 'til then.

## Smitten

Or afflicted, depends on your point of view. This morning at the office a fellow was telling us about his neighbor who rebuilds boats. Said he had six or so on his property. "Too many!" came his reply.

I says, "Power or sail?" Power came back as the answer. Well, I told him it was all a point of view. I've had them lining the driveway, sailboats, that is. My house at the time was pretty nondescript, what set it off as a point of reference to be used in giving directions were the sailboats, "When you get to the house with the yard full of boats, turn left."

I mentioned having a photo taken from within the house looking out the kitchen window. The sailboats were lined up, six or seven deep. Smitten, just a little. Afflicted, depends who you ask. That was here in Rockport.

This small sailboat thing has been covered by many others and will continue as long as we can keep doing so. What the neighbors think has been shrugged off long ago. The in-laws are ignored as well. Support groups such as made up of like minded individuals are of no help whatsoever unless, of course, another small sailboat needs a home or just an exchange in ownership.

Now there's a thought I've not explored, some kind of sailboat exchange. With this computer age upon us why not put together some sort of central clearing house for like minded hapless souls. Dan up in the northern reaches of the west is off and running on an idea which seems to be working for him.

With the affliction comes a certain understanding of others that those not so blessed just don't understand. That's not really a problem to those really determined. As we get older, natural hearing loss comes in mighty handy. At family gatherings now I decry the fact that so many of my brothers and sisters, there's nine altogether, have taken up to mumbling. Makes it hard to hear them at times.

## 6-18-17...to Start

I've been wrong before, it happens from time to time, more often than we wish to acknowledge. Keeping this light, there's no need to go into life and death and the hereafter. If we are honest, we can rest assured we really don't have a clue as to what's coming down the road.

Here something that came down the road, comebacks as I call them, show the ever changing attitudes rolling around in my mind. The latest comeback is a Montgomery 15. The adventures begin before it's even back in the yard. The travels begin their start in my mind and that's just where these started.

This 15 was sitting over in Corpus Christi in the water behind the seller's house over a year ago. Him traveling the way he does, selling it became a fiasco. I watched. After many frustrating months of no sail, it was mine. Just the hull, deck and centerboard, nothing else. Good place to begin.

Then and there the dreams began, the oceans crossed, shipwrecks averted. I was 25 again. A day spent hooking up the new sink for the wife changed all that. Eight hours and it's still dripping down below. Sore fingers, back, the lovely wife says, "Go sailing tomorrow."

Well, with such support one just takes the ball and runs. But first, back to the "Comeback." A friend and I went and picked up the 15, brought it home and I proceeded to scrape its bottom right there in the yard. The next day anybody venturing close better had braced themselves. The stench was arising. The wife was frowning. My friend commented how good dying sea life was for gardens, saving the day. Later he said, "You owe me!"

Well, as I was cleaning, or finished with the cleaning, another hapless friend came by, one who had brought a Montgomery 17 back from Central America, keeping land to port, always within sight, talked me out of my new to me 15.

Well, this same little girl now sits in my backyard once again. I've been scrubbing and cleaning and the adventures have again started. Her bottom won't be getting wet anytime soon. So I think I'll be taking my wife's suggestion and go sailing today. On the Lightning.

## Went Oystering

Went oystering yesterday, didn't mean to, just ended up in the midst of them. Had to put on my water shoes and drag, push and shove my way out of them. The water was low, tide out, the wind soft, not helping a bit but maybe then it was after all. Looking behind me I, did not want to walk the quarter mile and then some back tracking. Couldn't



sail back, didn't want to wait for higher water, so onward.

The scrapes and crunches, thinking my little girl is/or could get her belly cut bad was not music to my ears. Deeper water was only 15 or 20 yards ahead so I went for it. The noise was not good. Up ahead was some grass where I knew it'd be a bit softer and it was, and deep enough to float, but not sail yet. I kept my eye looking for rising water within my *Red Top*, the Lehman 12'.

The water, being warm and clear, let me see Mr Ray, whom I was about to step on. At first I thought him to be a flounder, thinking how to catch it, the tail told me differently. Having the bowline in hand I dropped it atop Mr Ray and he scurried off a few feet but still in my way. The second nudge I gave him with the line and he was off a goodly distance and no longer a bother.

Now I'm knee deep in water, deep enough to sail away except for the closeness of more oysters if a small mishap were to occur. Well aware of my dealing with mishaps, I elected to wade out a bit further. I'd put two ties on the furlled sail, both lee boards were raised, rudder raised and tied up. I was good to go.

Here came the small mishap that could have put me back on the oyster reef. I foolishly let the rudder down, well in the small wind waves it bounced right out of its gudgeons. Another "I've been meaning to fix that" problem. I've read where problems on small sailboats come in threes that bring in their



This overview of where I sail is accurate as most maps are. What's not shown are the thin water areas I get into.

wake disaster. I've found a clever way somehow to eliminate two of the steps. I'm just one away most of the time. So wading back out to deeper water, recovering ground that I'd lost reattaching the rudder, I was again set to go.

It came off with out any further hitches. The sail back was uneventful.

Before this started I had smugly told myself the direction I was going was the best way, that I'd discover a little secret shortcut. Well grace extended, kept it from being really bad on the boat, or me cutting myself falling on the oysters. Tends to keep one rightfully humble.



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# The SMALL BOAT Journal

AUGUST 1979 VOL. 1, NO. 1 \$1.50



## A Change in Course

By Dave Getchell, Editor

This summer (1979) Americans are being reminded once more that the days of cheap, plentiful fuel are gone forever. The implications of this fact are being felt across the full extent of the marketplace with concern focused on automobiles now and autos and home heating next winter. Blame for this travail is being cast in all directions and we have no intention of adding brickbats to the barrage. Suffice it to say that times are changing everyone's way of thinking.

Downsizing" already is a buzz word in the auto industry, and while its effects are yet to be seen in boats, one can be sure that potential boat owners and naval architects are giving the new realities plenty of consideration. Fortunately, on water there is no minimum requirement for speed such as that demanded of vehicles using our highways. A well designed large boat can operate quite well with a small engine (see 3hp boats on page 6) and small boats can go fast with moderate power almost as well as with high or excessive power. Of course, boats move well under sail or potato power also, so no one is about to be denied access to the water because of the high cost or shortage of fuel.

But the rising cost of energy may prove to be more important ultimately than the availability of any particular fuel. Nothing can be built or marketed without consuming a certain amount of energy in the process and it is here that downsizing some of our plans and dreams will be imposed. As the cost of boating, like everything else, rises, many people must look to smaller craft if they are to take to the water. For those with doubts about the practicality and fun of living exclusively with small boats, please accept our assurance that such existence is possible. Most boating

is done near shore, whether along the coast, on inland lakes or rivers. This is small boat country, a place of coves and inlets and backwaters that those with larger boats never see.

This will also be the country of *The Small Boat Journal*. We see the present energy turmoil as the beginnings of a long term change that will affect our lifestyles across the board. It is an important point in the history of small boats, too, for with new emphasis on the type, there are bound to be impressive gains in the design of boats and the means of powering them. We will follow these developments, attempt to interpret them and help where we can in expanding knowledge about small boats, not only among those new to the type, but also among those who long ago discovered the fascination and endless variety to be found in building and using them.

This is the first monthly issue of *The Small Boat Journal* and begins what we hope will be a long and exciting voyage of discovery. Our pilot issue last spring gave us it model to work from, but it will take the building blocks of monthly issues to bring this magazine to the point where it is serving the small boat owner we intend it to. The heartening response that has come from those who have read the pilot issue assures us that we are headed in the right direction and the ideas and suggestions many have offered have been carefully considered as we put together this issue and plan for others to come. We know from this response what we suspected when we contemplated a new magazine, that a publication concentrating exclusively on good small boats of all kinds is wanted by thousands of boat owners.

We intend to make *The Small Boat Journal* "their" book.

## Lost and Gone Forever Dreadful Sorry...

By Bob Hicks

Ah yes, I expect some of you do hark back to those golden days at the end of the 1970s when that wonderful new magazine at the left appeared, an outgrowth of the monthly John Gardner column in *National Fisherman* which we traditional small craft enthusiasts followed fervently each month throughout the 1970s when Gardner was leading the fight to save traditional small craft designs and builders from the heavy hands of the boating safety bureaucrats.

Dave Getchell and Dave Jackson persuaded International Marine, parent company of *National Fisherman*, to start up this special interest magazine and Dave G. explains why they did it at the left in his introductory Editorial. I was onboard early, as an article I had submitted to *National Fisherman* about building my first small boat in a barn on Mt Desert Island turned up surprisingly in a special introductory issue which the Daves had turned out to assess the potential market.

An early subscription promotion offered the following:

"Duane Gainer designed a 16' gunning dory in two pieces. The dory rests neatly on the foredeck of his 34' sloop and can be easily assembled in the water. You'll read all about this snap together, space saving, smooth rowing dory in *The Small Boat Journal*. And in case you think she'd be the perfect tender for you, we'll include full lines and scantlings so you can build one of your own.

*The Small Boat Journal* will take you cruising aboard a 23' cat schooner, lovingly described by her designer as a "skinny water cruiser." Ray Hendrickson will share his discovery of a 26' fiberglass version of the tried and true Verity skiff. We'll spotlight the work of an innovative Rhode Island boat builder whose welded aluminum boats include everything from small rowing craft and high-speed garveys to a 24' minidragger. And Phil Bolger will show you a solution to the energy problem, a beamy, versatile 16 'utility especially designed for economical operation.

That's just a glimpse of things to come from *The Small Boat Journal*. Subscribe today. Our Charter Subscription Rate is only \$9.50 for 12 issues!"

In his remarks at the left Dave stated, "We intend to make *The Small Boat Journal* "their" (meaning all of us small boat nuts) book." They succeeded admirably with the superb large (11"x11") format, big photos and illustrations and layouts, featuring an eclectic mix of articles for lovers of all small boat genre (yes, even outboarders). It was great, but...

That August 1979 issue, Vol 1 No 1, promised great future reading and it did not fail us. Just over a year later, suddenly out of the blue, all of us who had enthusiastically subscribed learned that things were about to change. In the October 1980 issue, with the somewhat prophetic cover photo of a small boat sailing off into the sunset shown on the opposite page, now Managing Editor Jim Brown gave us some bad news which appears beneath that cover photo. Skip over to read it before going on with my remarks:



Well, Jim put a good face on it but the reality was that *SBJ* was costing International Marine a lot of money as he explains. Finding a new publisher (*Hemmings Motor News*, which catered to the antique and classic car game) in Bennington, Vermont, was a bailout engineered by the two Daves to save their baby. What happened then was this:

"The Editorial and Business Office moved to Bennington, Vermont, in 1981 until their 10th Anniversary Issue (#66, May 1989), after which it became *Small Boat Journal* based in Atlanta, Georgia, then just *Boat Journal* in July 1990 (#73), finally becoming *Boating World* in September 1991 (#80), by absorbing *MotorBoat* magazine. At this point, traditional boat owners and builders appear to have felt that the original philosophy had been lost."

Despite the best efforts of knowledgeable small boat editor/writers like Dan Segal, the standard format "new" *SBJ* somehow lacked what I viewed as the "down home" touch of Dave Getchell's original issues. To their credit, Hemmings carried on for ten years until ongoing losses resulted in their selling it to an Atlanta, Georgia, magazine publisher who, in about two years, turned it into a motorboating magazine. How come? Because that's where the money was, consumer boaters who bought boats like they bought automobiles were spenders, small boaters were not. Major advertisers of consumer boats and related gear never could figure out who *SBJ*'s "market" was so never supported it with the advertising income needed to carry its production and distribution costs.

So, "Lost and gone forever...? Yes, I know, I've turned out *MAIB* for 35 years now to attempt fill the vacuum of *SBJ*'s departure and later on magazines such as *Small Craft Advisor* have come on stream but, in my opinion, we never have captured the allure and excitement that *SBJ*'s appearance in 1979 created amongst small craft folks.

For those of you who never had the pleasure of enjoying reading the original *SBJ*, I have reprinted on the following pages a feature article from that issue by Bulkeley Smith, Jr, who later became one of our early subscribers and contributors. As you enjoy it, envision what its impact must have been on our collective small boat community. At last, an article about what we were enjoying doing in a magazine that spoke to our interests, brought to us by Dave Getchell, a man who was one of us who had a vision back in 1979, a vision now "lost and gone forever, dreadful sorry..."



## Dear Subscriber:

*The Small Boat Journal*, in its first 15 issues, has been a resounding success in all ways, except financial. We have acquired a respectably large number of very loyal subscribers and newsstand readers and a profitable level of advertising sales is within hailing distance.

The price paid has been somewhat dear, however, especially in two areas, printing bills have been higher than supportable due to the 11"x11" format which is non standard, therefore expensive. The cost of direct mailing for subscription sales ran higher than expected.

The directors of our parent corporation have decided that it is not prudent to carry the burden any longer. But there is good news.

Those of us who have been closest to the production of *SBJ* remain convinced there's a need for a magazine like ours, dedicated exclusively to the interests of small boat owners. Indeed, the very factors that have made the launching of a new publication so difficult are accelerating a trend towards more practical and economical small craft we have featured uniquely among boating magazines.

Our belief that *The Small Boat Journal* has a high potential for success, financially as well as graphically, is shared by another New England publishing firm, one with a history of small and medium sized magazines for special interest hobby groups. Their faith and ours have been reinforced by the many expressions of support and encouragement we have received from readers and advertisers.

As I write this letter, negotiations for the transfer of *SBJ* to new business management are underway. We fully expect these negotiations to result in a *Small Boat Journal* that not only survives, but thrives.

Because there are business details to be concluded, and because our editorial and art staffs need a little extra time to make a smooth transition to a standard (8 1/2"x11") format for the magazine, the next issue will be delayed. Be assured, however, that Volume 2, Number 5 will be in the mail to you about mid December, and that your subscription will be fully honored. We hope you will bear with us during time of transition.

James P. Brown, Managing Editor



# A Sharpie for 32 Seasons

***She was no ocean racer, but she  
could hold her own with any in  
thin water and light air***

Bulkeley Smith Jr.



My first sailing, in the 1920s, was done in Little Narragansett Bay and its coves. Chapoquoit Harbor, Quonochontaug and Brightmans Ponds. For those familiar with any of these waters, there's a simple rule: if your boat won't go, get out and push her off.

I have been aground from Chesapeake Bay to Northumberland Strait, and I hope to keep it up as long as I can, but the bulk of my grounding has been in familiar waters and in boats designed to do so. One of the best of these was the sharpie of this story, designed and built by Ken Jones.

My first disciplined and solo sailing was done in a Cape Cod sailing skiff, a plain, tough and thoroughly forgiving boat. If you ran aground, you twitched the centerboard pennant and got away. Next, I played with a sailing kayak with a fixed leeboard. She was light and delicate and notional. If we bumped bottom with her, we suffered. Thus, early on I developed a strong taste for boats that would touch and go happily.

In 1940, I first looked into the late Howard I. Chapelle's *American Sailing Craft* where I discovered my type of boat, the sharpie. Here were sturdy, shallow-draft, lightly-rigged vessels with cheap and simple gear. After this I kept my eyes peeled for anything on sharpies.

Then I saw Ken Jones' design. She was not perfect, for she showed shrouds, a run that turned up perhaps too quickly to meet the transom, and she seemed a bit plump forward. In all, she might be judged more flat-iron than sharpie, but she was small, handy, tempting, I was hooked.

In the mid-1940s, at the head of a little bay in Branford, I saw a small, almost toy-like sharpie. She had no brightwork, but sported white topsides and spars, French gray deck and cockpit, red bottom, halyards cocking the booms just so, clean, lovely, and no stays. What was she? Whose was she? Gradually, I realized she was the Ken Jones design (with some differences) that had caught my fancy. For two years I dreamed about her, but never saw her sailing.

When we bought an old house back of the Thimble Islands in Stony Creek Village, a boat became a possibility and our dream took on some substance. We heard that the little sharpie was for sale. Helen and I tried her, looked at each other, and left the dock possessed of a vessel whose last tangible link with us was broken in 1978 after 32 years of love.

In a few days following our purchase, we had a stake in the mud just off the town dock (in those spacious days such things were not only possible, but usual). and with a strong easterly tide ghosted her over to the Thimbles one evening. I was curious as to why anyone would want to sell her and ultimately discovered that her owner had her built at the instigation of John Killam Murphy, with some JKM modifications. The new owner took her out and was badly scared by her. Rather than learn her ways, he decided to sell her but didn't let it be known. By the time we arrived, the price had dropped considerably.

The sharpie loved the Thimbles. She beached easily on the shelving rock ledges and on the beaches, and she thumped over half-tide rocks with aplomb. She would slip through places just wider than she was, and could always find a smooth lee behind the islands to race across no matter how it blew. Or, she might ghost out among the islands at night, getting her owners invited aboard all sorts of vessels by people who hadn't seen

Drawing by  
Peter W.  
Rogers

any sharpies sailing lately and wanted to know more about her.

In general she had excellent manners. She went to windward nicely unless the chop was too short, but preferred not to be strapped down overly hard. Ease off a hair and she would pick up markedly and go much nearer where she looked. The little sharpie loved it with sheets just started. She romped on a reach and sailed silently and, oh, so deceptively wung out dead before it. For a flat-bottomed boat she could move out with practically no wind at all.

Her initial stability was such that I could walk up and down her side decks happily, though she was only 15' long. Jumpy guests didn't affect her much and she was stiff enough to do a good deal of sailing on her bottom. Of course, she had no ultimate stability whatsoever, but she'd warn you just in time if you were pressing too hard, just as a dog warns you before it will bite you and in all those years she never capsized with anyone in her.

At those times when all sharpies pound, she would pound thunderously. Since it didn't hurt her we got used to it, but then most of the time she didn't pound at all.

Her big, open cockpit with its clean, smooth, flat bottom made it fine place for lounging or lunching or taking dogs, offspring or guests. My daughter sailed in her up to within a week of her birth, and was crawling all over her by the following spring. A harness with a leash going to my ankle made it all safe. If she went over I'd surely notice.

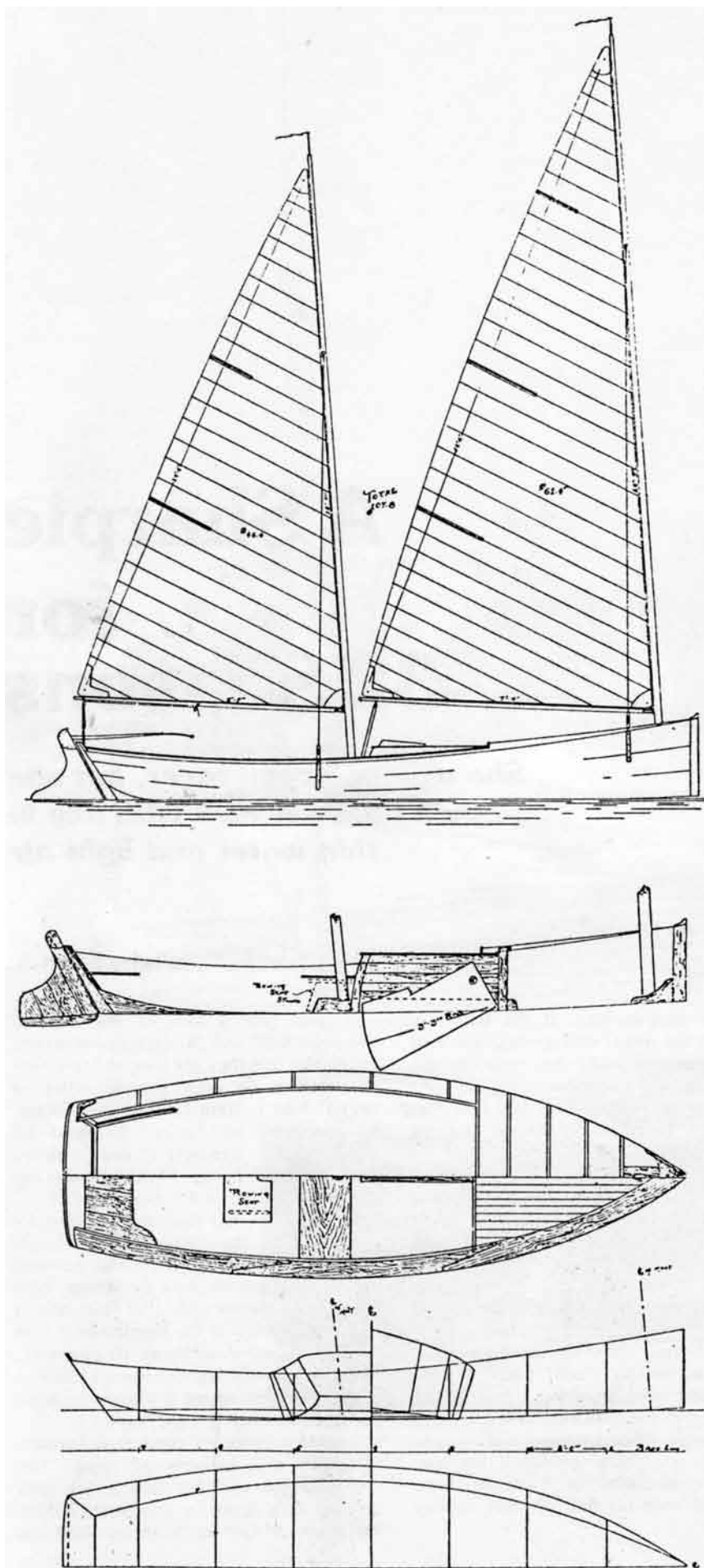
Provisions for food and sanitation were of the simplest. We could be aboard and sailing in half of no-time. A food basket, clothes and cushions came aboard with us. Everything else: fog horn, running lights, sweep, anchor and warp, bucket and a few simple tools lived there. Nothing was ever taken.

As we grew used to her, we found out some of the things which this sharpie could do: sail backward surely, slide sideways accurately for close work at crowded docks, work her way through the harbor at speed with absolute certainty in very close quarters, turn nearly in her own length and stop dead. She could also steer herself with no rudder by the use of weight, sail trim and centerboard trim. We could anchor her just off a dock with the centerboard so that bumpers were unnecessary (for short stops only).

Until the cotton sails gave out, we used to sneak up the little salt creeks and eel ruts on the rising tide. With no oar, paddle, motor or rattle of plastic sail to announce us, the creatures of the marsh ignored our passage.

With such fun available, I was slow to understand why the racing classes got towed in after running around the buoys or why other boats dropped sail, wallowed about, got their outboards alive and vibrated their way to the dock. Later, having sailed some of the newer ones. I discovered that lots of pleasure boats are no pleasure to sail. But we could get the sharpie set right and then let her take care of us. Good, quickly-rigged boats get used a lot and for several years she sailed almost daily after work and pretty solidly on weekends. Unsuitable boats don't get used. It's too much trouble, the weather is wrong, any excuse will do. I know. We've had unsuitable boats, too.

As we used her more, our confidence grew and we tested her harder. We even tried cruising in her, and for this she was unsuitable. Little boats with low sides and great



cockpits don't belong too far from shelter when it begins to blow. On the other hand, we enjoyed some fine thrashes to windward and grand, lolloping reaches with wet rumps returning, but nobody had to cantilever out in 7lbs of wet sweatshirts to do it.

She was easy on herself, too. In all the time we had her, she had three gear failures during sailing: a halyard and a sheet which I tried to sneak through to the end of the season, and a tiller.

From time to time I would attempt to improve the boat. I tried lashings on deck for the sweep, boom crutches, grating and a small summer cabin, but she didn't like them. They went away and were not replaced. She did accept cup hooks for the foghorn and my wife's canvas bag and a running light high on the foremast.

Accessibility in this boat meant more than summer cabins; a clean bottom meant more than gratings (sick dogs and lost sardine sandwiches explain all), and who wants to unleash a sweep in a hurry? This tendency for a boat to resist changes over a period of time suggests that the designer and builder may have produced a "unity of hull and rig," as Chapelle put it, which doesn't want to be violated too far. Put another way, if the boat can convince the owner that it works too well to be interfered with, then someone did something right somewhere.

Let me attempt to show you how this was done, based on my 30-odd years of living, with her.

When I first saw the plans in 1947 I thought she was too full forward and cut high aft too suddenly. After all these years with her, during which she sailed very well, I now think that I looked too much at the deck line and not enough at the chine line, which seems fine to me now.

I still wonder about the quick upturn at the end of her run. Could it have started earlier and been smoother? Prospective owners regardless of experience, always know better than designers and usually tell them so. Thank goodness this boat was already built or I would have interfered with her and possibly spoiled her.

Taking a look at the lines of Chapelle's 35' and 28' oystering sharpies, one can see that they are long and thin with proportions on deck on the order of nearly 5/1. John Gardner's 18-footer, *Shag*, is a bit fatter, followed by Winchester Bennett's scaled-down replica of a 35-footer. Fattest of all is our sharpie at 16'x5'x4', exactly 3/1.

Fortunately, her flare makes her a lot narrower at the chines, so she sails nicely. By the same token, she provides more elbow room than a slimmer boat would at this length. For instance, I have just looked at the Bennett boat with its slightly narrower beam, its confining, oval cockpit and higher coaming. She's a lot less roomy where it counts. While boats get smaller, people don't.

Another factor of comfort is lowness of sides and centerboard trunk. Our sharpie is just right for leaning our arms on the side decks or centerboard case. The case on Gardner's *Shag* is also low enough. I have sailed in her and she's livable, having been designed to be so. By contrast, James Curry built a replica of Chapelle's 28-footer. Photographs suggest an uncomfortable cockpit; I have sat in her and on her and agree. I think it has to do with the greater height of the case and the side decks amidships. On the deck one sits too high. On the bottom one sits too low and

the case cuts us off from our neighbor. Her scale is for oyster tonging, not for unspecialized messing about in boats.

I can only assume that Ken Jones had some idea of peoples' sizes and shapes when he started noodling his design. Incidentally, the sides of our little sharpie are high enough to keep standing two-year-olds inside, but low enough to be interesting to them.

Hull construction followed skiff and garvey methods instead of featuring the heavy, built-up keelsons and bulkheads of the true sharpie. In small examples such as this, I expect that skiff practice may not only be lighter, but also be easier to keep clean and ventilate than sharpie design. Gardner's *Shag* is also closer to skiff build, in some respects. Both boats have twin bottom stringers and no keelsons.

I am not sure of the wood used in my boat. I believe her topsides are cedar. Her deck, according to John Gardner, who has studied her, may be cypress. Her bottom boards were quarter sawn and never cupped. I expect they are pine, for the bottom showed less scarring than I would have expected if built with a softer wood. The planks were not sawn off flush to the sides, but stand proud perhaps as much as 1/8". Fastenings are galvanized boat nails.

The hull differs from Jones' plan in having a usefully high coaming across the front of the cockpit. The stern thwart does not go to the sides of the boat, and so cannot trap water. No rower's seat or rowlocks were provided since the station indicated on the plan is too far aft to be very useful, and the deck is too low to row without high outriggers.

The test of design, construction and maintenance of the boat is presumably the length of her life and the number of pieces which fail. This boat came to me after several years of overpainting and underusing. I sanded more and painted less, using flat top-side paint and soft bottom paint. The deck and cockpit were just touched up. Spars I sanded and painted lightly. Later I just spot painted often.

In the early years, she often stayed in from April to October. Cleaning her was done with bucket, sponge, brush and sometimes a handful of sand and salt water, nothing else. I used no cover, preferring to bail as needed instead. I hauled her out in the lee of my house in the partial shade of a winter thicket. I blocked her level and opened three drain plugs: one for the center and one for each side beyond the twin stringers. No winter cover was used either, although I did keep the ice out of her.

No piece of wood had to be replaced until she went out of my hands for a couple of years and was stored under an unventilated plastic sheet. After I got her back, we removed some rotten wood from the foremast partners and the deck and went to some shelter and lots of ventilation. We lost no more wood.

I used to worry that she might rot about where the stern seat meets the transom, but she never did. Another spot I expected to go was the point at which the side decks run into the transom. The joint always came and went a little there. I never puttied for fear of sealing in trouble. I never had any.

I did have her wooded down in 1965. Everything was fine then. However, the galvanized fastenings began to go in the early 1970s, and a run by trailer to and from the Mystic Small Craft Conference in 1973 loos-

ened her up a bit too much. I finally let her go to a man who I hope will fix her and bring her to Mystic in the next couple of years.

I think that the main reason her wood lasted so well is that she had good circulation, not just of air but of salt water as well. There were lots of little places where water got in, but I can hardly think of a pocket where it stayed. Regular bucketing with salt water may well have helped keep rain rot problems from developing.

I also never disturbed any caulking until it disturbed me. This resulted in no caulking by me, with one exception I shall mention later. I think my fastenings would have gone considerably sooner had I tried to force the planks apart to cure small seeps at the chines. By and large, I expect it may be possible that people do too much sometimes in an attempt to maintain perfection, and with great effort and a high sense of purpose do things that should be let alone. They suffer later.

Most boats as they age develop centerboard trouble, a phrase which can denote anything from weeping through warping to complete dissolution of the trunk. Ken Jones knew what he was about when he designed and built this one.

The trunk had vertical members which stayed rock hard and rock solid for the life of the boat with me. The forward one was held in place by the oak plank keel, the bottom planking, the heavy side logs of the case and the deck structure. The after one started out the same way and was notched into the mizzzen thwart. After that it was just a question of planking it up nicely and giving it a cap.

The centerboard pin passed through the logs just below the waterline. It was held in place by two very short, brass-capped pipes fitted into flanges that screwed to the case on either side. These parts could be had at any plumbing supply house for a dollar or two, as I discovered when, after about 27 years, one of them let go.

The only leak in the box was caused not by design or building but by the over-eager assistance of a springtime guest. He pushed a bit of messy old caulking at the top of the log into the box, and then with great dedication, pushed all of it through. It was never quite the same again.

The board itself was good heavy oak, was well drifted, and featured the perfect hunk of lead in the lower after corner and a bronze bushing for the pin. It was very light to handle. When pulled up fully, part of the board came through a slot in the cap of the case. This was how Jones was able to make his case low enough to lean on comfortably, while avoiding the problem of raising it. It is an excellent arrangement for teaching caution to kids; in practice no one lost any fingers.

The rudder was built in the same spirit as the centerboard. In 30 years, its heavily drifted oak planks opened up less than 1/8". This seemed to me of no consequence and I left the spaces alone, figuring that filling them would drive the boards farther apart. The horizontal bottom piece of the rudder touched plenty of rocks, but took no harm. It was a fine, shoal-water rudder except for its short bronze pintles which could dislodge from their gudgeons when bumping over the rocks.

When this happened, I turned to the 9' sweep, which also came into its own for sculling in calms and for running before the wind when it really came on to blow. A well-arranged sweep in a heavy following sea can settle the mind gloriously, much as it

straightens out the course. My rowlock was of generous size and was mounted well to starboard on the transom, out of the way of the rudder, West Indian fashion.

The original tiller broke in a blow and was replaced by a straight piece of hard pine, tapered so that it could be shortened by pushing most of it through the rudder head. This not only got the rudder out of the way if the boat was crowded, but also provided a handy, balanced way of carrying the rudder. The tiller was also of just the right width to force down the centerboard if it jammed in its case.

In his original design, Jones had shown heavier masts with shrouds. Our boat had somewhat lighter, unstayed masts. Rake was adjusted by fore-and-aft wedging. The masts were teardrop in section for most of their length with rounded heads and dumb sheaves carved into them for the halyards. When I last saw them, they were without check or crack.

The booms were flat sided and subtly curved on their undersides. They had sail tracks, bronze carriages for the cleat outhauls; bronze track, downhaul and gooseneck fittings and bronze bails holding bronze blocks. At the heads of the sails were bronze shackles with bronze chains guarding the pins. I expect the boom fittings weighed more than the booms.

The masts bore sail track, gooseneck track, downhaul cleats, halyard cleats or fairleads. The mizzen halyard belayed to the mast while the main led aft and was belayed to the starboard side of the centerboard case.

The sheets were each spliced to a pad-eye on a side deck, then passed through a block on each boom and down to a fairlead on the opposite side deck. Thus, each sheet also acted as a traveler. The sheets, halyards, outhauls and downhauls were all the running rigging there was, and it all worked too well to interfere with. The remaining hardware consisted of the centerboard pennant cleat, a mooring cleat and a pair of chocks, all bronze, of course. I replaced the bronze chocks with oversized galvanized ones big enough to take proper line and chafing gear. Other than this, I did nothing to the fittings except test their fastenings for tightness once in while. Nothing ever carried.

Running rigging was manila of comfortable section for my hands to hold. New line went to the halyards first, would be changed end for end; then get demoted to sheets, dock lines and ultimately, to rope for the neighbor's children to tie each other up with. Eventually I tried nylon for the centerboard pennant, and dacron for the outhauls and downhauls. But, for sheets and halyards I preferred the soft feel and traction of nicely broken-in manila.

The boat came to me with Egyptian cotton sails made by Chris Bottiger of Islip, NY. I added reef points and cringles after the first year. I didn't need them often, but was glad of them when I did. These sails set quite well, were beautiful, easy on the hands, and I was glad to dry them out between trips and ease off on the lines when it got wet.

When they started to go, Ed Raymond of Hathaway, Reiser and Raymond made me a new suit. They were dacron, taped instead of roped, bigger (no need to allow for stretch with dacron), had a gigantic roach in the l each and featured all the battens I didn't want. They were the first dacron sails I ever handled, and they were so noisy I was scared that they would shake themselves loose from the slides. They also set oddly.

Mr. Raymond came to Johnson Point and showed me what to do with taped sails. They were lovely, faster, smoother and since they're still in great shape, clearly immortal. No longer, however, could I luff quietly up little eel ruts without disturbing the waterfowl and a certain feeling of calm went out of my sailing life. Dacron is the best thing that ever happened to deaf sailormen. For years I carried a small kit of sail repair gear just in case. I never needed any of it.

As mentioned, my first mooring was a stake, cut in the woods and jumped into the mud of the harbor, just like all the others in Stony Creek. These things were usually hickory, and they would last several years before the worms or the ice got them.


Later at Johnson Point, I made a Great South Bay mooring out of an old kedge from a 35' fishing boat. I torched off one fluke and set it very carefully down with the other fluke down. This arrangement did not foul, nor could I impale myself on the other fluke in the shoal waters of my creek. This mooring took 10' of chain and about 30' of heavy manila, which came through my big, galvanized chock, took a turn around the foremast and ended in a gigantic bowline around the juncture of the centerboard case and the deck beams. This heavy line and hitch (well parceled) got me laughs in Stony Creek, where, in those days clothesline was not unknown, but it took me through the big storms of '51,

'54 and '55. The sharpie filled and capsized in two of them, but took no damage and never moved a foot.

If I were to do this boat over again what might I do differently? When I started thinking about this article I expected a long list of brilliant changes on the basis of all these years of informed infatuation. Actually, I should change surprisingly little, and most of that tentatively. Clearly I'd get the bronze out of the fittings and into the fastenings. With better fastenings, I'd have her today. I should also get rid of all those indestructible bronze cleats, only a hair too small, and replace them with bigger wooden cleats and belaying pins. I know I'd get rid of those noisy, heavy sail tracks and try lace lines. I'd also probably switch from booms to sprits, thereby getting rid of the last of the metal fittings. This would also rid me of that occasional tendency to yaw which booms have and sprits help stop.

But think of her is she was set up, and consider how well she served us and at how amazingly little cost in failures and damages, she was fine for our purposes, not to cross the finish line triumphantly, immediately to self-destruct like the ideal racer, but to serve our changing whims over a long period of time.

If I were to change her too much, I'd end up with another boat with other strengths and weaknesses. As she was, we could not have asked for a more eager or willing servant.



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We've been running our dinghy with an AGM battery, a small trolling motor and a 40 watt solar panel for several years. When we heard *Solar Sal* was visiting Lake Erie we wanted to see her. *Solar Sal* has no shore power plug, she is powered completely by sunlight. She had made her way some 200 miles to the city of Oswego from Troy on the Erie Canal. We drove up to Oswego to check her out.

David Borton, a recently retired professor of solar energy engineering, decided a few years ago to fight climate change with boats. He has since launched two all electric launches, and a boat building school on the Hudson River at Kingston, New York, is now building a 44' commercial tour boat for him that will also never need to plug in to shore power.

It will carry 31 passengers and is based on the proven designs of his two other solely solar boats, *Sol*, a 25-footer and *Solar Sal*, the 40' 5-ton strip plank cedar and pine canal boat, built in 2014-15 in a school bus garage by volunteers and students.

*Solar Sal* has two banks of batteries so she can operate for up to ten hours in darkness. On a bright sunny day the photovoltaic panel array on her roof supplies enough energy for her to run at 5 knots with a bit left-over for charging. Even on overcast days she can proceed at reduced speed. Both lithium and lead batteries are being tried to see which will prove to be best.

Borton has used his canal boat as a test platform for three seasons. His first summer with *Solar Sal* included a run the length of the New York canal system in 2015 with four tons of cardboard for a paper recycler in

## Solely Solar Boating

By Susan Gateley

Mechanicville. Since then she, along with a smaller older sister, *Sol*, have demonstrated that a solely solar powered boat that uses only light for fuel is not a stunt. It is, as Borton says, clean, quiet, reliable, practical, and now, proven.

The new sun powered tour boat is being built to meet Coast Guard standards for passenger carrying vessels. The boat building school is using modern composite construction for the hull, a combination of strip planking and sawn frames, protected by fiberglass and epoxy covering for low maintenance. Unlike a traditionally built wooden boat, there is no caulking and, except when it rains, a dry bilge. This method of producing one off hulls, widely used throughout the boat building industry, is taught by many boat building schools.

The public viewing this project is also learning about the growing field of electric boat propulsion as they install the battery banks and motors powered by solar panels that generate up to 6,000 watts of power. Borton demonstrated that his prototype boat could travel on overcast days and for up to ten hours in darkness on her battery bank. Like *Solar Sal*, the commercial boat is expected to make 5 knots as a cruising speed with excess energy used for charging on a day of full sunshine.

We motored around Oswego Harbor with David and his wife Harriet and Howard Stoner, a volunteer crewman. It was a brisk breezy day but the launch handled the minor

swell in the harbor and the wind with aplomb. She's powered by twin Torqueedo electric motors so with the torque and two props she's quite maneuverable. The design is adapted from a early 1900s Naptha powered launch. It's an efficient easily driven hull well suited for canal and protected waters travel.

I asked Captain Borton what had been most gratifying about the *Solar Sal* project, "The best part of building *Solar Sal* was working with a school district, students, parents, teachers, staff and community members. It's also gratifying to see people's enthusiasm when they ride on the boat." On this trip we had a family from Minnesota with us and they were, indeed, quite appreciative of the smooth silent ride.

Borton is a lifelong messer with human and gasoline powered boats. He grew up boating on northern New York lakes and currently has a canoe and a lightweight graphite and epoxy guide boat that he built himself. In addition to having the Coast Guard Inspected vessel for commercial use built, he is also working with a naval architect on a cabin cruiser version for private use. He notes that this will be a power cruiser that never needs to visit the fuel dock. At today's prices, he notes, the twin motors and solar panels will cost less than a comparable Diesel installation for the cruiser.

Once set up, the motors and batteries are virtually maintenance free. No fuel or oil filters to change and no worries about water or bugs in the diesel tank either. Plus, there are the classic good looks of a sleek sea kindly cruising hull that cuts through the water with effortless ease. She'll be a perfect true zero emissions canaler!



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I'm back to rowing. I don't row in the winter, although I could if we lived near the water. Sam Manning from Camden, Maine, used to keep a dory in the water all winter and he and his wife would go out rowing on nice days in the winter. I row off a trailer in the fall, so once it gets cold and icy and snowy I don't go. And then I had some hip surgery, both sides. But my last new hip was four years ago and I am really delighted. I can row completely without pain and it's back to being fun again.

I row a dory. I used to row a 17 footer that I built. Boy, is it ever fun to row a boat you have built yourself. Makes you feel kind of special. It took me years to finish the boat, I'm not too fast, especially when I don't know what I'm doing, but I got it done and out of the cellar and into the water and it was great, right up until the time I left it under a tree when a hurricane was predicted. My wife suggested I move it but I had checked the surf report on line and the waves in Rhode Island were only supposed to be 8' so I figured it wasn't a really bad storm.

Next morning I got up early to move the boat because it had been pretty breezy all night, I was too late. Sometimes you should listen to your wife. So I was doryless. I can't row if I don't have a boat. I looked eagerly in every issue of *MAIB*. One December I found one but didn't act fast enough. You know.



I finally did get one, an 18' Clint Eldridge boat called the D Street dory. A great looking boat, especially after I fixed a few things up and repainted it, got some decent oarlocks on it. Traditional construction but made of plywood instead of pine. My old boat had a double bottom, 1" pine and a 1/2" sacrificial oak bottom applied to that which was nice for landing on rocky shores. Here's my new one, well pretty new, all fixed up with its sailing rig ready to go.



I used to be interested in how fast I could row. I think this may have something to do with why I needed a new hip or two. I did the Blackburn Challenge one year and it was really great fun. Windy day, big seas outside and my boat leaked so I had to stop to bail twice in the race. I had a warped oar. I didn't know about greasing the leathers until two days before the race when I developed tendonitis from feathering those dry and hard to move leathers in their oarlocks. It's amazing what a little grease will do to the coef-

## Rowing Begins

By Paul Murray

ficient of friction. The Blackburn is a tough race, 20 miles. It took me almost four hours and I found out that if speed was my goal, a fixed seat single that weighs 300lbs may not be the right vehicle for me.

My new dory may be a little lighter but it has a lot of windage and, if it gets breezy and I'm rowing into it, I don't break any kind of speed records. Now I'm older and we do change with age so I no longer row for speed, I'm more interested in the exercise and attendant health benefits and the beauty of it.

On the particular morning that prompted me to write this about rowing I launched my boat off the trailer to set up my small mooring just south of Owls Head Harbor in Maine so from today on I'd be able to just leave the boat in the water. Then I could get in my dinghy at the dock, row over to my bigger boat, climb in and take off rowing in the dory. It's pretty cool.

This morning there was no wind to speak off and the tide was right so I could row around Monroe Island without having to pull hard into the current on the back side. It can be a really long slog rowing into the current. I'm not sure what the current is in knots, but it's a 10' tide and if I time it wrong, I'll work really hard to get around. I'd done that the previous week.

One of the cool things about rowing is figuring out currents and all. Do you know the tide trick? Tide movement sets up currents. The tide moves 1/12th of its height in the first hour, 2/12ths in the second hour and 3/12ths in the third and fourth hours, then back to 2/12ths in the fifth and back to 1/12th in the sixth. So if I'm rowing north when the tide is setting up a current south and I'm in the middle hours I will have the worst current. If I'm in the first hour it won't be too bad. If I can time it so I'm rowing with the current, why then it's all downhill, down current and if downwind it's as good as sailing.

I usually stop somewhere for a dip. I'm on the back side of Monroe where I feel as if I am the only person on the planet, the sun is low but it is warming me up nicely and, of course, I wear a hat because of a melanoma I had removed. Too much sun is not a good thing now. Start wearing hats early boys and girls if you're able to listen at this point in your life. So there I am, having rowed enough to be tired, out to where I cannot see anything but other islands. Not a soul in sight. I pull in to a shingle beach, set an anchor, take off my T-shirt and jump in. It's cold. I swim a few strokes. My wife will stay in for 20 minutes in this water. I don't. I get out and do a little stretching, half moon pose, warrior pose, fixed firm pose. I breathe it all in.




I get back in the boat. I love to launch my boat off a beach. If there's a swell it's tricky, rocky shore and all. This morning there is almost no swell making its way into this little beach and the transformation from land to water is magic. From heavy to light. From solid to fluid. And then, out of the current, out of what little wind there is, I pull on the oars and the rocks start to slide away backwards and I am mesmerized. Salt, trees, rock, elemental.

Varnished oars, gold in the morning light, the boat moving absolutely effortlessly. Fast? I don't want fast right now, I want forever. I pull out around the northern point of Monroe. There's a lobster boat. The spell is somewhat diminished. I can see the harbor if I turn around, less than a mile away. I pull to it, still reveling in this act of wonder. Rowing. Facing backwards, going forward. Slowly. Steadily. Rhythmically. Effortlessly.



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## Gray Fleet

Research and writing of this column is about six weeks ahead of publication, thus we all will know more by the time you read this about the *USS Fitzgerald* (DDG-62) that collided with a Philippine flagged freighter *ACX Crystal* killing seven US Navy enlisted men. At this time it seems that the merchant ship was on autopilot with no one paying attention on deck (a very common occurrence) and people at the helm of the destroyer assumed the slow ship would make a course change. At 0230 they collided on the starboard quarter affecting substantial damage to the warship both above and below the waterline.

Initial reports note that the crew went to damage control stations and fought successfully to keep the *Fitzgerald* afloat. During that period, officers made the hard decision to seal the ship (locking all watertight doors) that meant that the missing crew would be flooded in their berthing spaces. Whether they were killed immediately upon the collision or were seriously injured and unable to escape or simply drowned is not known at this time. Several injured sailors including the Commanding Officer were airlifted to a hospital.

Evidently the *Crystal's* broad bow punctured the superstructure, collapsing several compartments including the CO's stateroom, tossing Commander Bryce Benson through the hull actually outside the skin of the ship. Below the waterline, an approximately 10'x10' hole was ripped in machinery and crew living spaces. Half the crew is quartered in that area. The ship lost communications so the *Crystal* was the first to issue a call for assistance.

The *Naval Institute Proceedings* had earlier published an article indicating that in the wide expanse of the ocean, very maneuverable ships can and do collide fairly often. General Quarters drills and damage control training is absolutely necessary simply because bad things do happen.

The dead were a cross section of America. Ngoc Troung Huynh was of Viet Namese heritage, Shingo Douglas was the son of a career Marine, Noah Hernandez was a Texan from Guatemala, Victor Subayon was a Filipino from Manila, Gary Rehm was white and Xavier Martin of mixed ethnicity. The age range was from 19 to 37. They enlisted from California to Connecticut. Truly they represented the best of America's citizens and they died doing their duty protecting US lines of communication in the Pacific.

This should be a great reminder, in this era of nationalism, that our nation is comprised of more than White Anglo Saxons. We are protected and defended by a plethora of men and women from different ethnic backgrounds and from all over the world, willing to sacrifice all their tomorrows for our todays. And they all were volunteers.

Huntington-Ingalls received the nod from DOD to manufacture a new amphibious assault ship, *LHA Bougainville* (LHA-8). These incredible ships are a wonder to behold, proffering berthing and food service for over 1,200 Marines. Looking like a small aircraft carrier, an LHA houses a full squadron of helicopters able to land troops and retrieve the wounded. It also houses a small sized hospital to care for the wounded. Typically they have at least four operating suites run by surgeons and hospital men.

Ahhhhh, didn't we already discuss this? Indeed, the LCS ships designed to be the greatest thing since ice cream, come in two



## Over the Horizon

By Stephen D.  
(Doc) Regan

versions, the *Freedom* Class and the *Independence* Class. LCS construction sent the Senate Armed Services Committee, headed by Sen John McCain (R-AZ), into a tizzy when the Navy, budget mindedly, suggested that only one be built in 2018. President Trump immediately demanded two. One would think, based on their feuding, that McCain was a liberal Democrat and the President an ultra conservative Republican, but they are both GOP to the core and fairly conservative. McCain does not like the LCS ships and feels the Navy placed its future on a sad, problematic ship.

Meanwhile, Marinette Marine launched the *USS Billings* (LCS-15) with great celebration in Wisconsin. *Billings* is a Freedom Class LCS, in other words, it looks like a regular warship. Down South, the Klingon looking trimaran, the *USS Jackson* (LCS-6), underwent her sea trials including a four hour full speed endurance run, launch and recovery of landing craft (rigid hulled inflatable boat or RHIB) and air and surface defense systems. She is ahead of delivery date thanks to Austal USA. *Jackson* will be added to *Freedom* (LCS-1), *Fort Worth* (LCS-3), *Independence* (LCS-2) and *Coronado* (LCS-4) in San Diego.

LCSs *Milwaukee*, *Detroit*, *Little Rock*, *Sioux City*, *Billings* and *Indianapolis* are being built or on trial at Marinette Marine in Wisconsin. LCSs *Montgomery*, *Gabrielle Giffords*, *Omaha*, *Manchester*, *Tulsa*, and *Charlston* are being constructed at Austal USA.

Some brilliant mind within the Navy Department has decided to eliminate the traditional wool pea coat from the sea bag and replace it with some sort of parka made from synthetic fabric. The "real" pea coat has a high collar that covers the ears and its length is long enough to keep your tush warm on very, very cold days. Those of us who served in the Navy used our pea coats until they wore out. I have never had a warmer coat despite paying some high prices to match old faithful that I outgrew years ago. Leave it to the bureaucrats to mess with something that has worked since it was introduced in the British Navy in 1731. If that isn't enough, the switch will eliminate several hundred US textile jobs.

### Life in the Water

The ubiquitous Asian Carp has again cleared the electric fence between the Chicago Sanitation Canal and Lake Michigan raising deep concerns among environmentalists, boaters, and fishermen (and women). A bipartisan group asked the Trump administration to alter the navigation lock on the canal, but they were met with little hope that the Federal government will make any changes. The Army Corps of Engineers plan was called an "unnecessary experiment" and "building new bells and whistles will cost too many taxpayer dollars" by Republicans in the administration and in state government.

Of course, Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc) led the bipartisan challenge by saying, "Today's discovery is incredibly troubling and it shows how urgent our fight is right now. There is no excuse for any further delay." Members of both political parties that do business on the Great Lakes are very disturbed that Washington fails to see the economic and environmental issues involved.

An Asian Carp can grow to 100lbs and consumes about 20-30lbs of food daily. The problem is that these fish quickly destroy the habitat and food sources for other fish, wreaking havoc on commercial fishing and all businesses associated with the Lakes. The overall lack of planning is exceedingly distressing.

The North American Right Whale is critically endangered with experts estimating their numbers to be south of 500. This particular species was named because of the high quality meat and oil, thus the "right" whale. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the International Whaling Commission (IWC) have worked diligently to get an international moratorium on whaling but have been ignored by Japan and Russia. Norway and Iceland have also continued to be primary whalers despite researchers finding unacceptable levels of mercury in killed whales. Interestingly, American companies like Talbot Clothing and Gorton's Fish company own companies that hunt whales.

One particular disturbing aspect is the collateral damage caused by whale hunting. Over 380,000 cetaceans are also killed during the hunt. Most of these are the result of poor equipment such as lines and nets that break free from ships and entangle other denizens of the deep. The Minke whale's primary cause of death is asphyxiation by drowning in netting and lines. As one official stated, "there is no reason to commercially hunt whales anymore. There's no economic viability in the industry."

Japan has another bloody custom that persists annually, the dolphin kill. Fishermen drive dolphins into small coves and block off the entrance. They then cover the dolphins with tarps, drive metal rods into their heads to sever their spinal columns and then insert wooden dowels to keep blood from saturating the water. The primary use of dolphin meat is for dog food. Let me repeat that, the primary use of dolphin meat from these kills is to make dog food. The HSUS, The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (US) and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums have condemned this senseless slaughter, however, (no surprise to anyone) Russia, Asia and the Middle East continue to purchase this meat to feed their pets.

Among the great and wonderful creatures of the sea, the Chambered Nautilus (*Nautilus pompilius*) is one of the most remarkable because it has remained fairly unchanged over time and still generates arguments among scientists about its classification and history. Related to squids and octopi, the Chambered Nautilus actually is a grouping of ten different species of similar cephalopods. Unlike their cousins, these animals are fully covered by shells, have no eyes per se (although they have many receptors that "see" light, chemicals and movement) and have 90 tentacles. Amazingly these beings have remained basically unchanged for over 400 million years. They have survived five different extinction events when many other living things died off. Scientists assume that because they live at great depths they avoided disappearance.



Also in the realm of wonderful sea life, the Horseshoe Crab is another ancient living connection to 400 million years ago. An Arthropod (of the family Limulidae and the order Xiphosur) the Horseshoe Crab is not related to other crabs but is family with spiders and arachnids! These virtually science fiction entities have no hemoglobin in their blood but get oxygen from hemocyanin that is rich in copper thus making their blood blue. Hemocyanin is molecularly a pair of copper atoms connected by a single oxygen radical that the Horseshoe splits to get O<sub>2</sub>.

They lack traditional eyes but have two lateral compound eyes composed of over a thousand ommatidia that detect light and ultraviolet light plus ventral eyes and hundreds of photoreceptors to say nothing of the five pair of eyes on its shell. It even has eyes on its tail and on its underside. They are kind of like nuns, they see everything!

Like others in the water, the Horseshoe Crab is facing dwindling numbers because of their primary enemy, mankind. Japan fishes specifically for them but the US is another culprit due to loss of natural environment along shorelines. The world pays a price for those pricy beachfront houses. Now I am going to feel guilty this winter on Treasure Island, Florida.

Ron Corbett, the Republican candidate here in Iowa for governor and current mayor of Cedar Rapids, shook the deadwood from limbs by stating that he thinks that the biggest problem facing Iowa is water quality. He cited the data that indicate Iowa as the worst polluter along the Mississippi River, the size of the river's Dead Zone off Louisiana and the increasing cost of filtering water in urban Iowa. This is, of course, directly opposite of the tactic being adopted by current accidental GOP Governor Kim Reynolds who took office when Governor for Life Terry Branstad became Ambassador to China. Branstad and Reynolds are tops on the donation list of Big Ag Chemical. Meanwhile both GOP Senators from Iowa voted against the Clean Water Act.

Many are downplaying Corbett's run but his leadership and direction of Cedar Rapids after the disastrous flood of 2008 is miraculous. The entire downtown area was a story underwater, one hospital was completely flooded, 5,000 homes were destroyed and unemployment skyrocketed with all the businesses closing. Under Corbett's command new high rise construction downtown is everywhere, we have a new Federal building, flood protection saved the city from yet another major flood, we have a new amphitheater, new downtown hotel, new parks, an incredibly thriving upbeat section of boutiques, shops, farmer's market and general entertainment neighborhood and overall assistance for those who lost their homes. Corbett has been the Eisenhower and Nimitz of Cedar Rapids' urban development. He is getting a lot of attention in and out of the Republican Party. AND his son is in the Naval Academy.

### Accidents

A tourist boat on the Penoi reservoir near Guatape, Columbia, sank leaving several dead and many missing. Video of the sinking clearly shows the boat slowly submerging on an even keel but people were panicking and attempting to reach an upper deck. Dozens of boats and jet skis were near the vessel when she started down but scared passengers apparently did not grab life jack-

ets. The boat rolled violently to the starboard but regained balance, however, once the water came over the gunnels it immediately sank to the third deck. The video of the event is incredibly clear.

A Coast Guard study of boating accidents showed that of the 4,158 accidents involved in 626 deaths and \$42 million in damage. 76% of the deaths were by drowning and 86% of the victims were not wearing lifejackets. 85% of the boat operators did not have any boating safety education, 80% of the deaths were in boats under 21'. Inattention, inexperience and excessive speed were to blame for most of the accidents. Surprisingly, alcohol was farther down the list of primary causes. Texas was the number one state for boating accidents.

### Nautical Archeology

Stephen Wickler's scholarly treatise on medieval shipwrecks in Northern Norway presents a picture of Scandinavian seafaring life between 1200-1350. Without my going into academic detail of the findings, Wickler believes one of the three wrecks he investigated was from the Traena Helgoland region. The first indication of a wreck was a crude hand carved figurehead found by a young boy in relatively shallow water. This was forwarded to a museum that started full archeological examination of the area in 1958.

The ship was a broad hulled clinker built cog constructed from Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) approximately 20m long with an assumed beam of 5m. An axe obviously shaped its frame timbers but its straight sternpost suggests a stern rudder rather than a side rudder more common for the period. Scientists also found small items including blocks and a deadeye. One of the more interesting finds was cloth material that Wickler thinks was sailcloth. The material was tightly woven in one direction possibly of a gray thread, however, the other direction was more loosely woven with a thicker brown yarn. Carbon dating placed a date of its working life between 1160 and 1284. Anthropologists presume that the craft was involved in the cod trade.

### Merchant Ships

Jill Friedman wrote in *Maritime Executive* that June 25, 2017, was the Day of the Seafarer, an event that went virtually unnoticed because it was also Goat's Cheese Day, National Catfish Day, Color TV Day and Log Cabin Day, certainly all warranted parades, speeches, fireworks, political proclamations, cotton candy, clowns and street dancing.

Friedman openly lauds the mariners who deliver us with day to day goods without our appreciation or even thought. What about the other 364 days out of the year? We ignore them unless some sort of accident occurs and we need to imprison someone. As she says, these individuals have to cope with the vagaries of weather, suffer storms and hurricanes, deal with pirates, live under the thumb of unscrupulous owner/operators who often fail to adequately feed them or protect them while cheating them out of pay. Worse, they are at the beck and call of agents who skim off the top, illegally but it is met with a wink and nod. Capt Friedman, a skipper as well as a writer, thinks that a Seafarer Day is great but wishes government actually did something to show a little appreciation to our merchant crews.

A pair of New Orleans shipping executives wrote a provocative editorial in the

Cedar Rapids *Gazette* trying to get Iowa to comprehend the connection between corn production and hauling cargo. Iowa, one of the world largest producers of corn, sends massive quantities of grain down the Mississippi to New Orleans regional shipping terminals where it is loaded and transported around the world. Louisiana continues to cope with silting and chronic dredging to a level that is currently incompatible with the larger cargo ships. The state needs to lower the bottom to a minimum of 50' and this they cannot afford to do.

If the Port of New Orleans fails to meet the needs of freighters, Iowa's biggest export product will need to find another adequate port. The obvious point is that this corn must move on to a drastically higher cost mode of transport that, in the long run, raises expenses extensively. That unto itself will raise export prices and lower the amount purchased around the world. Pointedly, Louisiana's problem is Iowa's problem. Whether the Midwest farmers perceive the mutuality of concerns remains to be seen. As a lifelong resident of rural Iowa, I fear the worst.

### Yachting

Someone was watching old TV shows including the famous "Route 66" about two young guys in a hot Corvette running along the highway seeking fortune and rescuing damsels in distress. Herb Stewart, a popular TV producer of the era, was responsible for the show. If the name seems familiar it may mean you love small boats. Stewart is also known as the man who introduced the West Wight Potter in the United States. I knew there was a reason I liked that show so much.

The Hanse Yachts of England are top of the line vessels offering incredible amenities, pulchritude and envy appeal. For those who desire size, the Hanse 675 is a mere 69' in length (63' at the waterline), 19' beam and a displacement of 34 tons, certainly indicating that this is not a trailer sailer. With a mast at 104' it won't be sailing this on the Mississippi River. 2,500sf of sail will probably get it from St Pete to the Tampa side of the bay. A new one might be had for a mere \$1 million. *MAIB* readers should be quick to buy one ASAP.

Mere mortals might enjoy places like Hooper's Yachts near the Twin Cities. It is a boater's Mecca. Their used boat selection is fairly common for the 15'-30' types with price tags we can handle without getting dizzy. A 1983 Pearson 303 with headroom for the 6'3" sailors, a well maintained 13hp Yanmar and all the bells and whistles normal folks would care to have can be had for \$25K. And that is negotiable.

At the other end, a Jim Taylor designed Precision 15 with trailer is priced at \$3,500. Boat yards are those spots that make sailors drool, wallets pop out of pockets, divorces commence and children watch their college savings fly away. Children need to see Disney World, sailors need to see boat yards. Do you have a favorite boat yard that you love to wander around?



There is nearly a month gap since Part 1 was written. Even though I have been working steadily almost every available day since then, the canvas covering and resulting needful fairing of overlaps with the DAP lightweight spackle, plus myriad other details such as making a mount for the seat, has been very much more time consuming than I expected.

I had selected a heavier covering fabric than Rowerwet usually recommends, using a cotton duck canvas from Jo-Ann's Fabric (\$9.90/yard, 61" wide, but because my wife had a 50% off coupon, \$4.95/yard). I bought two 4½ yard pieces which weighed in at 9lbs for nine yards, or 16oz/yard, as compared to the 10oz/yard polyester fabric used on the Chuckanut 12. Total cost was about \$45.



## Building the Sawfish 12 A Foam Kayak

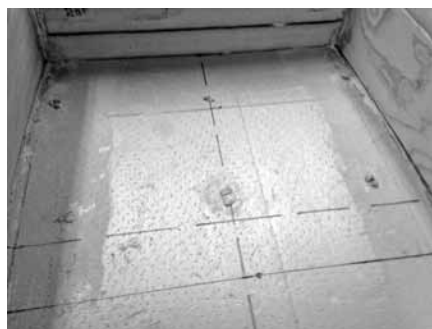
Designed by Rowerwet (Josh Withe)  
Author/Builder Jim Brown, Sweetwater, TN

### Part 2: Covering and Finishing

Fitting non flexible canvas over so many compound curves has required doing the boat in many pieces with many slits in the fabric to accommodate the curves. I found that using Carole's pinking shears greatly reduced the number of extraneous strings coming off the fabric edges. However, the pinking shears introduced a new problem, when the pinked edges were saturated with glue and dried, the edges raised up creating sawtooth like edges which had to be sanded off and the edge seams filled with spackling compound, then resanded to produce a smooth paintable edge.

In the course of doing this work, I read Rowerwet's reference to The Battleyak, a heavily modified fishing version of the Sawfish (with electric motor, battery, lights, bait well, rod holders, etc) and looked up the building video on Facebook which showed the builder covering some odd shaped large bottom strakes with some denim cloth from an old pair of jeans. Eureka! A revelation! If there is a next Sawfish it will be covered with Stretch Denim which will conform much more easily to the compound curves which have consumed so much of my time for the past month. That fabric is also available at Jo-Ann's Fabric for \$12.99/yard, but with Carole's 50% off coupons that would be little more expensive than the cotton duck I am now using.

Since I am installing a GCI SitBacker seat similar to that I used in the Chuckanut 12, I needed a means to mount that seat in a foam floorboard. This required building a seat bracket that would accommodate the under seat straps of that stadium seat and a means of screwing that assembly to the foam, so I drilled ½" holes in the foam bottom, filled the holes partly with PL Premium and inserted 1½" lengths of ½" dowel I had on hand. After the excess PL was trimmed off, the dowels were drilled to line up with the previously drilled holes in the seat mount. This installation is strong enough that the entire boat can be lifted up by the seat mount!



Rowerwet, after testing the original Sawfish, suggested that all such boats be fitted with a keel strake to prevent the boat from being blown sideways in a stiff breeze and to aid tracking while paddling. I had enough foam scraps left to piece together a 3" high by 2" wide keel which was glued in place with PL Premium. The top edges were rounded off with the #60 grit sander and the keel covered with the cotton duck canvas. Even before covering the keel with the cotton duck, the entire boat could be lifted by the foam keel with no problem. Of course, all that Titebond II wood glue will require more sanding, filling and sanding. Actually, it is not the work of doing these things which consumes so much time, but it is the waiting for the glue and spackling to set up sufficiently to be sanded. I must confess that most of this work is of my own making. I am not a perfectionist but I don't want my boats to look "too homemade."



In the process of doing all this, I got so carried away with the prospect of a denim covered kayak that I decided to change the planned color of the kayak from Rustoleum Safety Yellow gloss enamel to a grayed blue latex satin house paint (HGTV Sherwin Williams Sea Creature HGSW3342 in Assure Satin Base, \$22.98/gallon at Lowes). I had to try it out in a small spot on the hull. Perfect! Looks just like denim on this canvas.



After some more filling and sanding of canvas joints and overlaps, painting was started using a 4" roller and a foam brush for the corners. For the first coat I used a fuzzy roller intended for rough surfaces but it left too many little fuzzies in the paint so I switched to a foam roller intended for smooth surfaces. Three coats used three quarters of the gallon of exterior house paint. Each coat looked better and a fourth coat might have improved it still more but I decided to save one quart in a jar for future touchups or modifications and to minimize weight.

At this point a weigh in was appropriate: Bare foam boat shaped, but no additions, 17lbs.

With canvas, glue, spackle and three coats latex paint, 27lbs.

With seats, seat mount, hatch and straps (no cooler), 33lbs.

So the boat ended up 10lbs lighter than my wife's previous Wilderness Systems Pungo 120 (43lbs manufacturer claimed weight) and 6lbs lighter than my previously built Chuckanut 12. All three boats were nominally the same length and width (12'x28"). I could undoubtedly have saved some weight by using a lighter covering fabric and a lighter seat/mount assembly and

being less persnickety with the filling, sanding and painting. My modifications to the as-designed boat by adding a fourth layer of 2" foam added weight as well. I would guess it could be 27-28lbs easily.



Cost of the boat, including 9% Tennessee sales tax, ended up being about half of what the aforementioned Chuckanut 12 cost to build:

- Two 4'x8' sheets of 2" Formular Pink Foam: \$63.22
- One gallon Titebond II Wood Glue: \$19.59
- 18oz Gorilla Glue: \$20.23
- 9 yards Cotton Duck Canvas: \$49.23
- 1 GCI Sitbacker Stadium Seat: \$27.00
- 1 quart DAP Patch and Spackle: \$7.06
- 1 gallon Blue Satin Latex House Paint: \$25.05
- 1 tube PL Premium 3x Adhesive: \$5.09
- 1 Gamma 2 Paint Pail Lid: \$7.94
- 10 Blue Nitrile Gloves: \$2.81
- Bamboo Skewers/PVC pipe/ Misc Screws: \$3.00
- Total: \$230.22

Obviously the cost could have been reduced by using a less expensive seat, fabric covering and paint. Also, I used some scrap wood from my woodpile. Mostly it was 1/4" exterior plywood left over from previous projects so a prospective builder might need to add \$15 or so to the total. So here she is ready to splash.



All the various straps were attached to the foam hull by either drilling holes through the fabric and filling with PL Premium and inserting folded straps (carry handles) or by drilling holes and inserting PL Premium and wooden dowels which were drilled and straps screwed in place (cooler straps and lifting straps for the garage ceiling hoist). The blue straps were cut from some Chinese imitation Thule straps which came with some rooftop kayak J carriers I bought recently.

All that remains now is to hang the boat on the garage hoist next to the Chuckanut 12 and then get them both out for a sea trial, probably on nearby Tellico Lake, launching at the Notchy Creek Wildlife Ramp.



Well, I have just fulfilled half of the tasks mentioned in the previous paragraph. The other half may take a little longer. It's pouring rain right now with a lot of rain forecast this week. But I promise a water test report soon and a "comparo" (as *Motor Trend* would put it) on the pros and cons of our now sold Wilderness Systems Pungo 120, the Dave Gentry Chuckanut 12 completed in early December 2016 and the modified Sawfish 12 just finished. This will not be a "which is best" report but just the pros and cons of each as I see them so every reader can judge for themselves which kayak best meets his (or her) needs. Faire Winds!



## Hubris or Just Dumbpidity

Call it excessive optimism. Call it hubris if you must.



Anyway I slice it, I just have to call it a flop. Nobody's perfect, certainly not me, but I seem to be having a bit of a bad run lately. Ferinstance?

OK, ferinstance I'm home tonight. I was on my way to Bellingham, on Puget Sound, to join a couple of other boats that were slated to join a whole bunch of boats at the northernmost American San Juan island. A gorgeous place. Great camaraderie, a blended small boat rendezvous with both a large contingent of Canadians and an assortment of Yanks from many different backgrounds, affiliations and boating proclivities. I've been looking forward to it for a long time.

I was about 200 miles into the drive of about twice that far. As hard as some folks might find it to believe, we here in Almos-tanada are experiencing 100° temps with very, very blue skies at the moment. So, to skip some of the heat, I was making the first leg of the trip after dark. I had pulled over to clean my windshield of the inevitable bugs using one of those glass wipe thingies. It seemed to do such a good job on the bugs I sort of absent mindedly swished one across my eyeglasses (polycarbonate lenses with a couple of different coatings.) Pretty good apparent job there, too.

Back on the road and kapow! Oncoming traffic suddenly resembled one of those video depictions of a near death experience. And true in more than one way. I totally destroyed what turned out to be my only pair of non sunglasses with me. I had to park next to a wheat field and wait for morning. Too late to recover and join the group and, besides, with my luck of late the trip was probably ill starred for other reasons yet to reveal themselves. I had to bug out on a venture that for all appearances will be the social/boating hit of the season for those who attend. Not from hubris so much, just dumbpidity and some would say that we make our own luck. In my case I'm certain that's true.

Ever since last January I've been looking for an opportunity to put *Gypsy Wagon* in the water and test the concept that she will perform capably as a towed along accommodation barge. This project has spanned a whole year. Scads of articles and hundreds of photos later, I still hadn't actually TOWED the darn thing. Reenter hubris.

Like several past years now, I volunteered to lead the Fourth of July boat parade around Diamond Lake. This year I planned to

## The View from Almost Canada by Dan Rogers

field not only *Miss Kathleen*, but her "trailer" *Gypsy Wagon*. I had two family groups scheduled to join in the fun. We were gonna be a pretty impressive exhibit. Jim came over to help me launch two boats at the same time on a busy weekend. He went ahead to meet me at Lon's dock where I intended to decorate and stage from. Within no more than ten seconds it was obvious that this just wasn't a happening thing. I made some significant miscalculations someplace along the way. She sits way down by the bow, or at least way up by the stern. Actually, what is supposed to be a tri hull is really a monohull with spray deflectors masquerading as sponsons. That's how they got the square shape to work.

That poor boat is one helluva hog on ice when towed. Granted, I took about 800lbs of wet foam and rotted plywood out of the hull and then out came the 800lbs of Detroit Iron, outdrive and a bit more for the gas tank. Anyhow, without some sort of significant redo, that boat is completely unusable as configured. The deep vee bow and pretty steep deadrise all the way aft get her oscillating like a winning contestant in the Miss Metro-nome Contest for 1957 in one of those slinky knit skirts. Serious case of hyper sashay.

Here the girls are getting dressed up but they ain't both going to the party. Two empty trailers. A busy weekend at the ramp.



At least there was time to paint and mess with *Miss K's* trailer so we could get ready for that drive to nowhere. And as far as I got it looks pretty much like nowhere.



Maneuvering in close to the plethora of docks circling this urbanized puddle would have been a real headache. And when I studied how much she "leaned into" each succeeding violent arc, the notion of taking women and children along (for fun) just withered and died. Right then and there. Strike two.

Then there is the matter of *Lady Bug's* motor well, the one that I sort of just cut from cockpit sole to bottom via liner and stiffeners. I have already overheated two outboards and killed them in that round hole. Seems I was a bit too exuberant in reducing noise. Nothing like a huge wad of insulation to keep things warm, I always say. So it was with a bit of trepidation that I disassembled my faithful Nissan long shaft. The idea was to install the motor (this time a water cooled unit) in the well both from the top and from the bottom. The screw and related appendages are too large to drop in from the top.

Yep, you guessed it. Lying under the boat, holding everything up in one hand and rebolting by braille up inside a restricted tube (I made it out of plastic drain culvert, if you must know) I must have managed to get the water tube displaced from the water pump. But since it all sort of went back together I figured everything was copacetic. Not. Unless you can say that burning the paint off the power head is copacetic. Strike three.

We make our own luck. My luckmaker is lately on the fritz and the girls are getting impatient with me.



## A Hot Summer's Day

A hot summer's day spent, as it should, on the water.



Rod, the new custodian of my first Frankenwerke restoration, showed up early. Already getting warm out, how 'bout a hop upriver before the crowds arrive?



*Old Salt* is based on what remained of a 1959 Glasspar Seafair. She now sports a period perfect 1959 Johnson Seahorse, "Fat-fifty." Heavy as an old Buick and about as economical at the gas pumps. The sort of thing some of us lusted after before we discovered girls, at least.

But hey, some of us remember 'em when they were new. I'm quite certain a 17' boat was way, waaaaaaay bigger back then. Know what I mean? The sort of thing that spawned dreams of crossing oceans.

OK, so the water isn't quite as warm as it might look. But I wanted the picture and swimming was the only way I was gonna get it. That's Jamie in the forward hatch. Not sure if he wanted to go swimming with me or not.



Not so bad, after I'd been in for a while. Just for laughs I put this one in of a white whale sighting. But be kind, whales have feelings, too.



Most of the places Jamie the sea dog and I visit tend to be on the quiet side. Whenever possible.



Not so many damn people. We're not selfish, just sensible. Except today, we made a brief stop for a quick liberty call in a busy marina. Lots and lots of people, lots of boats.



In fact, all these people got out of that one boat. No wonder those jobs leave such a big wake.



Anyhow, it was a good day out there, wakes, or no wakes.



## Mast Raising

Like a beautiful Phoenix Bird, up from the ashes of neglect and unfortunate decisions.

Poor little *Lady Bug* has been sitting patiently here and there. Now and then, cold and hot, wet and not so wet. I finally made it her turn in the barrel and high time for that.



A proper cooling water barrel, a workable lift, a well thought out assembly procedure and special made appliances to help with the job. And presto!



Mr Nissan is ensconced and apparently happy with his surroundings.



And that's a very encouraging sign because I have been working toward this bend in our common road for nearly a decade. But I think it's time to revisit some old inventions, stuff that has taken longer than a decade to arrive at. Much hole drilling, much moving of things but some things seem to have worked out pretty much from the get go.

I met a guy on a launch ramp a month or so ago at Fern Ridge with the COOTS. He told me his name was Captain Dufus. Seems he can claim sinking the same boat twice and I do have to agree, that sort of notoriety might be best left at the door. Anyhow, we got to talking about who had the better mast raising system. Of course, I do and I told him I'd send pictures (just as soon as I got the sticks and muck and detritus of two winters dug out and hosed off).

Speaking of Dufus', I figure it's too hot today to go sailing, a day fit for mad dogs and Englishmen out in the noonday sun. So I went out in that 100° noonday sun to make these shots. Now I'm busy slopping aloft on my extremities and wondering about dufusness.

Stuff that seems to be still state of the art. Mast raising:

*Lady Bug* has a modified beach cat rig, about 6' longer than the original, to support a full battened main and a flat cut jib. She also has an extended rudder with a 6' tiller to manage some of the wee haw forces incumbent in such a potential overpowering. It takes a lot of strings and wires to hold all that in place and move it where I think it should be moved. But there's a plan to this apparent chaos. For starters, both mast and boom stow off center to allow for simple access in and out of the companionway. This also allows for motor-ing trips on the water without having the sticks crowding the cockpit.



Getting started is a simple matter of sliding and rolling, no real lifting. The foot gets pinned with a loosely fit  $\frac{1}{2}$ " bolt through the tabernacle that I made out of a couple of chunks of scrap aluminum channel. The lifting A-frame resides permanently on the foredeck and pivots on some homemade chain plate and thrust bearing contrivances that also mount the inner shrouds that stiffen the upright mast and control its tendency to lay over to one side or the other when raising. This constantly messed with mast also has internal halyards to eliminate at least some of the tangle of cordage.



The mast crutch also has homemade rollers set at an angle to keep the mast oriented and the shrouds, lazy jacks, halyards, etc, contained until they come taut.



The bi-pod attaches to what will become an inner forestay when the stick is upright. The two part tackle is led aft to a cabin top halyard winch, just crank it up.



This works both in the water and on the trailer, rolling about at anchor, even. The headstay waits patiently until it's time to fasten it to a multi part tackle at the stem head. Both the headstay and inner forestay are tensioned with tackles and jam cleats. Presto, the rig is up and no need for split rings, turnbuckles, none of that stuff I'm likely to drop overboard.

Still working, still pretty much untried by just about anybody else. If your macaroni rigged boat takes longer than 30 minutes to launch and sail away, then I'd suggest trying some of this stuff. Just gotta drill some holes...

## Recovering Ragbagger

I'm afraid it happened again. One minute putt, putt, putt, the next... it's something every "recovering ragbagger" frets about. When the motor quits. Sort of like when mom says, "...beeeeee carefullllll..." and you aren't. Early sidewheelers still carried masts and sails. Granted, they remained furled most of the time, just up there getting all sooty. Nobody really trusted Mr Fulton's monstrosity. This striving for convenience and comfort has always had its downside. I should say "down slide."

For the first year I carried an extra motor on *Miss Kathleen*, sometimes both a gas outboard and an electric. That stuff not only takes up a lot of space, it adds a lot of weight. And the way I have Franken engineered this whole thing, it takes getting back on the trailer to really effect a swap. That, and a lifting crane and a passle of tools.



I think the crux of the matter is pretty simple. The notion of “adventuring” assumes a high degree of self sufficiency for a couple of reasons. One of ‘em is that help is likely not going to be available, even if other boats and people are close at hand. Yesterday was a case in point. That little voice told me to head upwind not downhill to my initially contemplated destination. So about five miles out, when my purportedly reliable 15hp, four stroke Yamaha suddenly quit and steadfastly refused any of my ministrations, entreaties and blasphemy, I at least had a Plan B.

Other boats passed within heaving line range as *Miss K* wallowed in a moderate sea-way Nobody slowed, nobody even looked my direction In fact, I assumed that even if I flagged somebody down they wouldn’t likely know how to perform a tow in those conditions. Granted, some of us know that a boat rolling beam-on with the engine hatch up should be a sign of something untoward. Some of us do. Apparently most of us don’t. So I concluded that we would self rescue.

The hatch provided what turned out to be a sort of a squig’ger mizzen. We could gybe through about 90° degrees if we paid close attention to leeway. Here we had returned to the lee. Landfall was still almost to windward and around a set of obstacles. It became a bit of a game, the object being to land as perfectly as possible back at the dock of origin unaided.



The fact is that we did ‘er. Achieving the target, deadstick the last 200 yards, wasn’t a real big discovery. After all, *Miss K* was born a sailboat and a pretty good one, in fact. Her rudder and keel are truncated to 30% of their original spans and that top hamper is not much of a lifting surface. Basically it was a simple matter of running off in the puffs, sharpening up in the lulls and keeping a very light hand on the wheel until we landed at the launching ramp dock against the fender, ship-shape and Bristol fashion.



Obviously I need to figure out what ails Mr Yammy. He’s already absorbed an expensive replacement OEM carburetor, a fuel water separator, new hoses secondary in-line filter, new fuel tank, ethanol free gas fuel stabilizer and all the verbal encouragement one motor could hope for. As a pensioner of modest means, for me a brand new motor is pretty far beyond the pale. That, and any hope of a continued “cruising schedule” this summer We are already one-third of the way through July. The countdown to Labor Day is thundering across the calendar. I’m thinking that recidivism is no crime. We recovering ragbaggers need to stick together. After all, we can quit whenever we really want to. Right?

## Recovering Ragbagger Part 2

There’s no real joy in Mudville over this. *Miss Kathleen’s* motor still has to be figured out, I’ve got waaaay too much skin in that game to just give up. But it’s been over two years since I’ve actually been sailing. Incomprehensible. *Lady Bug* and I just had to go find a ramp and see if we still knew how. I know, I know, when the horse throws you, you are supposed to get back on. Back on, the SAME HORSE. Supposed to. Well, anyway.

The ramp here at Diamond Puddle is less than a mile away. The sun was out, the trees were twitching. Plunk, in we went and we just motored away out into the middle.



It took me about a half hour to remember where all the lines and blocks and cleats and spars and stuff were supposed to go. I may invent this stuff but I rarely figure it’s my job to remember what it was that I invented, especially maybe five or ten years ago. In fact, while the starboard telltale has finally gone AWOL, the one to port and the one held onto the VHF whip (by a slab of yellow Harbor Freight electrical tape) have been on duty continuously since *Lady Bug* and I went to the TX-200, nine years ago.

And a lot of the mast raising stuff and sail trimming stuff has been in place about as long. That’s one whole lot of quick fixes. Surprisingly most of it still functioned, away from the trailer out in the middle of the lake, no less. Sails up, sheeted in and off we went.



And ya know what? Yep, that little girl still knows how to dance. We even self steered for a while. Not too shabby for a 16’ hull that is half as wide as she is long.



This is summer, this is a small lake, wind doesn’t stay in one direction more than a few minutes. We didn’t care. The port tell-tale (never more than a piece of intentionally frayed whipping thread) still knew how to report the shifts. The one that still holds court on the whip back aft did OK extrapolating for the over the hill starboard string. She still goes where she’s lookin’ and Mr Nissan doesn’t seem to add too much drag from his new digs in the cockpit motor well. Life was good!

There’s this relatively long, narrow bay where the water shoals right up to hip deep. We sailed in there, following the shifts and catspaws. The sun was warm. Getting’ on, time for swim call. It would have been time for a late lunch but seems I was in such a hurry to go launch that things like anything to eat, a stove, towel and change of clothes, even life jackets were left behind. So we anchored and dropped the linen.



I swam ‘round and ‘round and then several more laps ‘round my little girl like old times. I even did some timid dunking under the hull. Nothing logical, just ‘cuz.



Just ‘cuz it’s summer and that’s what boys do in summer. By then it was getting close to 1500. Lunch hadn’t happened. Maybe, just maybe?

The ONLY thing left in the cupboard. No time like the present is what I always say. I offered it here to Mr Nissan. No sale and I don't blame him. Next time I'll load a few essentials. And yes, I'll replace the duty VS can to a place of honor in the bilge. Who knows? Another five years and I could have a real yen for a can of Vienna sausage. It could happen.



I dropped the stick, stowed the bunting and squared away for the ramp. Right there on the hook.



And the only casualty of the outing, my elbow smacked into the venerable "Saturn" bulkhead compass. He's never been covered and exposed to the elements most of the past 35 years. First in Arizona, then California, now in Almostcanada. The juice had leaked out a few years back. The bezel finally frosted over but today was the last straw.



No doubt it's time for a fitting burial as sea. Although I doubt I'll need much of an excuse to get *Lady Bug* back afloat and real soon.



Maybe sailboats aren't the only thing but sometimes they can be the best thing...

## OK, So, Now What?

Life is full of surprises, disappointments and major course changes, nothing particularly unexpected, lost or paradigm shattering there. Nope, we just have to figure it out, decide what's still important and pick up the pieces. I've been taking stock, trying to be both imaginative and thoughtful. Yeah, I know, that's one of those oxymorons, ain't it?



Mostly I've been trying to figure out how I ended up with all these boats again? There's another four of 'em hanging and sitting on trailers behind this bunch inside the barn. I can count at least another six or seven that I've given away in the past couple three Building Cycles. Another handful have gone off to the dump. Each one had a purpose, an intended mission profile. Each one had a definite personality and a place in the fleet. Then I came up with another new "brilliant scheme," thus the Mobius Strip of Frankenbuilding. And you're right. Being thoughtful can be a real buzzkill.

So let's shift over to the imagination side of the house for a while, certainly a much friendlier place. Here's the question on the table. What am I gonna do with *Gypsy Wagon*? The surprise is that she didn't work out "as designed." The disappointment is that the people I put this one together for didn't take advantage of the offer. I guess they never really existed. The course change has to do with figuring out what to do with several thousand pounds of steel, fiberglass and wood that needs to be licensed, maintained and stored.

For decades now I've been scheming about some sort of tug and some sort of barge anchored together in some hidey hole or steaming seamanlike out through Deception Pass or through Seymour Narrows on the way to some distant landfall. It was a goal

that became a quest. Turns out *Miss Kathleen* is quite sufficient all by herself, doesn't really need a "trailer." Turns out *Gypsy Wagon* doesn't follow along worth a hoot and probably nobody would take the trouble to show up and bunk aboard even if she did tow well.

So tonight I was trying to be imaginative. Mostly I needed to figure out if that brainchild of mine could do anything well and whether there was a market for such things. Like, can this boat move around under her own power? Only one way to find out, on with a motor and down to the ramp.



That was easy. Without the niceties of steering, controls or windows to look out from up forward we had to do some simulating. But that little 15hp two stroke actually got us up on plane. Directionally, pretty stable, pretty nimble coming alongside the dock.

She oughta' be beachable, easy to launch and, if finished out inside and outside, she oughta be CUTE. There's a standup enclosed head, a galley, a hanging locker, plenty of space for tanks and heavy stores, room outside for a couple of lawn chairs both front and back.

Pretty good waterside views and I'm thinking she will make an excellent "travel trailer." I've got some ideas, maybe some good ones. I've got to talk to the boys and girls in our Frankenwerke Department of Hairball Ideas, to see what they think. We'll put a plan together. I'll let you know...

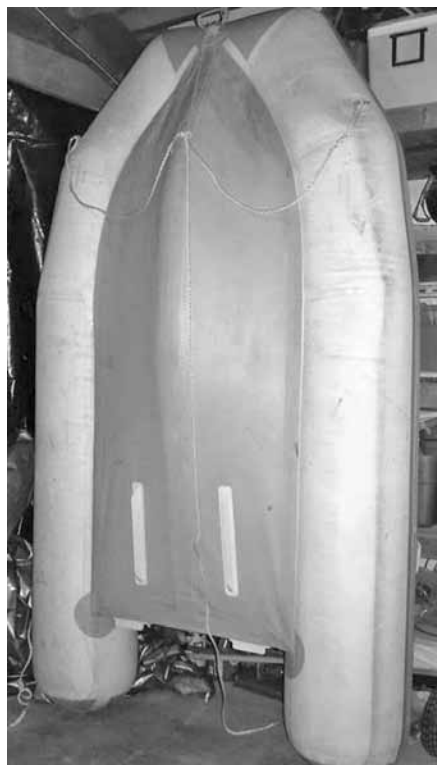


## Maybe, a Good Idea... ...Well, Maybe

About a year ago I was just “window shopping” in the local craigslist boats for sale section, just whiling away some minutes that probably would have better served actually “doing something,” and there it was, the dinghy of my dreams. I’ve had one before and just about nothing is quite so stable when stepping down from the mother ship, especially with my arms loaded. Granted, kayaks paddle better, rowboats row better, skin-on-frame boats are considerably easier to carry around, nesting dinks take up less space. But doggone it, rubber boats don’t crash into me all night at anchor and they tend to stay right side up. That’s a very good thing.

The ad was for a 9’ Zodiac, one with an inflatable keel and floor, no less. One that I should be able to roll up and haul in the back of the truck. One that didn’t require smashed fingers and pinched knees to insert a wooden floor into. And, to top it off, it was really, really cheap, like 10% of the new price, cheap. I called the guy up and swore great and astonishing oaths that I’d be there ASAP.

When I pulled up in front of the guy’s house, there it was out on the lawn, inflated and looking almost new. I walked briskly to the door, handed him the money and said, “Get away from MY boat...” Well, we all know about deals that are too good to be true. I got the boat home and hung it up in the garage.



This one had a bit of a problem, the floor and keel didn’t hold air for very long. Throughout the winter I added air and fussed with the valves. I tried the liquid soap spray tests. I ordered new sets of valves. I tried all the easy stuff like thread seal tape, pipe dope, etc. Nope, the keel and floor just wouldn’t hold air. Finally I called The Dinghy Doctor in San Diego. Somehow I remembered that outfit from 10 or 20 years before. The Doc confirmed my worst guess, “No, we don’t have a better valve for those. Sorry, they just LEAK...”

A replacement floor costs about twice what I already paid for the boat. Seemed to me that the Harebrained Notions Department here at Frankenwerke should have an idea or two of what to do. At first they played around with plywood floors and keel inserts. They even worked out a rough drawing on “drafting paper,” you know, a slightly used paper towel. But things were getting awkward and heavy, this was supposed to be a portable thing. Basically, the idea of having a boat rolled up seabag sized was, by then, all but moribund and without the bottom shaped and the floor nice and stiff it would be a lot like stepping down into a flaccid trampoline. Also, the poor waif would not follow along behind the mothership deftly at all.

Then it just slapped me upside the head, an absolute stroke of Frankengenius. What if I just filled the offending bladders with that spray foam? It’s mostly air, it sorta rejects water intrusion. And besides, it would be inside a couple of waterproof membranes. What could go wrong? Well.

Filling the keel bladder went pretty well, basically it just filled up from the bottom and I replaced the valve into the threaded portion when it began to fizz. Not too shabby and things hardened up over the next day or so. It could be a lot denser than need be in some places but pretty close to what I hoped to achieve. So, fresh from that victory, I decided to try the same thing with the floor but it’s not made at all the same way, thinner and wider, for starts.

My “insertion straw” on the cans sort of got bent up like the proboscis on a well swatted mosquito. In fact, more foam started oozing out than was probably going in so I grabbed my pretty big shop vac with the 3” pickup hose and started blowing air into the chamber as if I was still trying to inflate it. This time, of course, with the valve missing. Kaboom! I guess we reached critical mass sooner than expected. That foam is sticky and can really splatter all over the place when put under compression as it comes out of the can in the first place.

At that point there was little to do but try to thread the valve back into its hereditary home and wait for things to settle down. Quite a mess to try to scrape off, a real “tar baby” when it’s still gooey.



Other than that, things look promising. No longer a rollup but certainly a firm and properly shaped little inflatable. Can’t wait to hang a small motor on the square end and give ‘er a try. Her name’s *Plan-B*, a buxom and jolly lass.



## Existential... ...It’s Like, Existential Like

For those of us who chewed our way through one or more of those undergraduate philosophy classes, there may still be a faint glimmer of a recollection of Jean Paul Sartre’s seminal work, *Existentialism*. Me? I can sort of still picture the book cover and now I’m wondering if I ever really even opened that book.

I was reminded today that just getting a small sailboat away from the pier, getting the sails up and simply just being there is pretty damn close to an existential truth. Part of that revelation melds nicely with the basic question, “Why don’t we all ‘just go sailing’ more often?” The stark answer is, of course, “Because sailboats are complicated, confusing and oftentimes a lot of work.” Especially if we don’t have one ready to go in the water in a convenient place at a convenient time. For just about all of us that would be “not,” “not likely,” “ain’t such” and “are you kidding?”

So dragging a boat to someplace wet, launching, rigging and timing the ephemera of wind can be just about a non starter. Has been for me for some time now. Once upon a time I went sailing almost every day, sometimes two or three times. All the time. So today was sort of a peek into the how-comes of the universe. Ol’ JPS might just have approved.

I was supposed to meet up with another boat. But that boat cancelled at the last minute so I almost decided to bag it. Sound familiar? But we were hooked up and ready to go someplace.



Seemed a shame not to go find a wet spot someplace. Basically, if I didn’t go south or west there was either north or east to choose from. So I headed east toward the rising sun thinking that I’d head north. But I was still dithering over that decision when I reached the turn and somebody behind me had already started to enter the left turn lane and I didn’t think it prudent to pull over abruptly with my



little red wagon train. So we just continued east toward the rising sun. Pretty basic. The first ramp we came to (and passed up) had a mast eating cable strung over the top of the backing in area. Not a deal breaker since we can rig in the water, but on we went. The next ramp was a nice ramp but there's a train bridge over the water directly adjacent. Another mast eater. Yeah, we could launch and anchor to rig after transiting under the railroad but that turn-off was a bit too sharp to make with my lack of commitment.

On we went toward the rising sun. The next ramp was OK. Actually, there were two ramps each with a long dock alongside. But truck and trailer parking was pretty limited. We've launched there before, quite a few times in fact, but for one reason or another we continued on. The ramp we were then headed for is often crowded, exposed to wakes and not quite what we had in mind so that's where we went.



And there were no boats, no people, no wakes and a nice breeze sprang up just as we backed in. So for the next three hours we beat off to weather toward the rising sun, long boards from side to side, poking into every cove, hidey hole and marsh along the way.



A pretty steady 3-4 knots boat speed from a pretty steady 5-6 knots wind speed. Dunno for sure, speedo's busted but we really didn't care.

*Lady Bug* can self steer pretty well in these conditions. We do have an autohelm but it's on a shelf in the shop someplace. Didn't matter so much, the boat and the wind were figuring things out. I went below and made a snack. Came topside and it was time to tack. Just the basics, you know, existential.



Sometimes I put my foot up on the tiller to help out with the steering. Mostly *Lady Bug* didn't want help, she just wanted companionship. Most of know this. We do tend to forget but deep down we know that the boat knows how to sail already. We're just along for the ride and to put the mast up.

So here's what I got to thinking. Whatif? Whatif we sort of rearranged our priorities just a bit. Whatif we tried to think of raising that mast and running all those strings through all those blocks and fairleads as part of sailing, not as something we have to put up with in order to go sailing? Whatif all the "work" was just part of it? Whatif we really didn't care how long it takes to rig and unrig? To the boat it's just like, existential. And we're just along for the ride.



I found a rather cryptic note on my bench, "OK, so, now what?" It was written with an obviously dull carpenter's pencil on a small piece of cedar scrap. There are not too many guys around the Frankenwerke who can actually write so I'm pretty sure I know who left me the note.

I was doing a bit of racking and stacking, boats were moving in and out of the shop, in and out of storage, getting ready for future boating events, here and there. Getting checked out and loaded, gas, mooring lines, life jackets, general "stuff" that I'll be glad to have sometime. That's when I uncovered that short note. Not such a simple question, in fact, one we ALL have to answer all the time.

I think of it as a navigation problem. First I need to figure out where I AM. A couple of other questions do pop up almost immediately. First off, it often helps a lot to know where I've come from and, finally, if I don't know where I am going, I'm most likely to end up someplace else. But, of course, it helps a whole lot to know where I WANT TO GO. A crummy little note scratched on a board.

The oddest thing about this whole deal is that somehow I've managed to get "caught up." Never happens. I've got a motor cruiser capable of long range ventures both over the

## Full Mission Capable

road and afloat. There's another cruiser that is lighter to tow and beachable and likely to be considered "cute" just about any place we go. Having a cute boat is important, that's how I meet people. There's a trailerable keelboat for sailing on the "bigger" water that I have a hankerin' to go sailing on. That little girl is a veteran of many, many, farflung adventures. Modest accommodations but very capable both under power and sail. There's another sailboat that is actually quite capable and quick to launch for those quickie trips. There's both an inflatable and a rigid dinghy out there and a kayak. They all work, the motors run, the sails are in good shape, the trailers all have new axles and tires, registrations are up. Every square inch of each and every one of these boats and trailers have been messed with, modified, replaced, repaired, repainted and haywired together. We are Full Mission Capable!

That's the problem. For some, the joy is in the doing it, the being there. They really don't care what sort of boat they ride in. These folks don't drill lots of holes in or cut big chunks off of a boat, they just sail, or row,

or paddle, or cruise. Not me and maybe not you. But those folks are out there, they are at every launch ramp, every resort.

Some of us get our jollies from actually building a boat. You know, with plans and proper tools and correct materials and care and craftsmanship. Boy, oh boy, do I wish one of those guys would come to work for us here at Frankenwerke. I suppose it's our working hours or wage scale that keeps those guys away.

There's a sort of outlier, fringe element, the group that really gets their biggest satisfactions from simply figuring things out, literally from picking up the piece of plywood that happens to be available, the one on the top of the pile usually. Often that determines finished length or width. Drilling the hole to fit the bolt in hand and adding washers if that bolt is too long, counterboring if it's too short. Cutting the cambers by eye, developing slopes and tapers "from on horseback." Stuff like that. That's pretty much what keeps the lights on here at Frankenwerke. After the actual figuring out phase is over, about all I have left is more or less a paying of dues, which seems to have led up to that crummy little note on the board.

So now what?

"Sha-zam!" OK, I realize that the picture below, to the casual observer, might not seem that shazamworthy, but my exclamation was probably partly engendered by the providential circumstances under which it suddenly just seemed to hatch and also by the fact that it looked like maybe I was finally looking at something that might work.



Also, when I first looked at it I was surprised that the surface looked level. I had thought that the height of one of the modules I was using would make the other end need a shim or something. Then I realized that the table itself was level (or pretty close to it) even though the camper itself sort of lists to port.

Yet another factor was that the only reason I was at home on this particular day in the first place was because the bus driver had phoned in and cancelled and they didn't have anyone else to replace him. It might also have been partly because, what with everything lately, my usual "there's always a way" mental modus was beginning to erode which made the sudden appearance of a potential working solution even more of an amazing and welcome surprise.



Meanwhile, after a bit of trimming, here is the table with the work of lofting that photo of the original profile view (from the Android) in progress. The picture on the table is an enlargement of that photo that I made on the computer at the Hutchinson Center. I remember, with a certain amount of chagrin, my statement from Part VI, "From this photo it shouldn't be a problem to loft the bow section of the original *Dancing Chicken*." Which, of course, it shouldn't. So what the colorful, classic, salty old seafarer's expletive was happening?

It is true that the time before this that I lofted something, the drawings from which I worked were scale drawings (being Phil Bolger's nifty plans for the Bolger Tortoise, which I used for *Talitha Cumi*). Also, the photo was skewed because of the angle from which I took it. However, these factors probably impacted the progress less than such things as noticing, after I'd drawn the basic drawing of the bow log, etc, that the paper I was using was an inch too short.

I extended the paper by taping another piece onto it and made corrections. OK, fine,

## Dancing Chicken A Mini-Saga in (?) Parts Part VIII

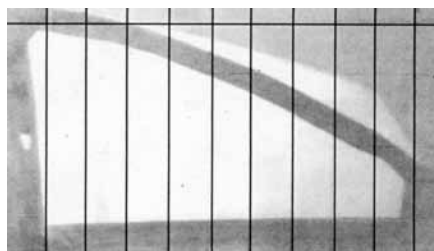
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except that next I somehow managed to draw a different number of lines on the drawing than on the enlarged photograph. From there for a while apparently the process went something like this:

Make a totally absurd error, figure out what happened, say something like, "Oh, of course, no wonder," and blithely continue on, at least until bumping into the next moment during which I suddenly found myself muttering, "Why isn't this working?" I am pretty sure that these and all other absurdities perpetrated in the course of the project can probably be attributed to not heeding the admonition "measure twice, cut once" or its functional equivalent,

One good thing was that at some point I realized, thankfully before I'd drawn a full grid, that all I really had to loft was the curve of the chine since I already knew the measurements of the bow log and the aft end of the forward section and besides those were both straight lines. So then all I needed to do was to draw vertical lines on the enlarged photo, make some dots, draw vertical lines on the larger drawing and make some more dots. Very simple.

Several days and at least three sets of vertical lines later I finally drew one that seems to have worked. Here it is.

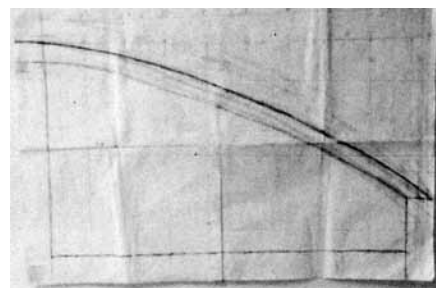


Next I made a drawing partly from the dots and partly by visually compensating for the skew which I did by taping the drawing to the wall at the Hutchinson Center, holding the enlarged photo in my hand with the part above the curve folded down and backing up with one eye closed until I could see both curves. After some adjustments I thought maybe I had it pretty close.

To check it I took a photo of the drawing on the computer so that it was about the same size as the enlargement of the photo of the profile view and printed it out. Then I took the enlargement of the photo of the profile view and the enlarged photo of the drawing and held them up to the light to see if they'd match. I'd love to be able to record something erudite and quoteworthy but, being the stickler for accuracy that I am, I have to report that what I actually said was, "Wait. What? Wow!" They matched.

Here is the drawing. The folds and creases are because I realized at some point along there that I could work, at least on the drawing part, at the Hutchinson Center so I have been carrying it back and forth in my backpack. So there, basically, is the building plan, or part of it, since the extended forward

section will be 4' long, i.e., 1 1/2' longer than that section in the drawing and there will be at least one other section.



Next I have to decide on the building method and materials because every time I think I've got that part figured out, another factor in regard to something or other comes up. For example, I have just heard from a friend about a new tape that is totally waterproof. Hmmm! I have several ideas on the shelf from the past that may have just been waiting for this event in order to leap down and participate. Is one of those ideas something that will turn out to be just right for *Dancing Chicken*? We shall see.



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My giant fantail launch *Queen Anne* is coming along slowly. I was on the disabled list for a while for screwing up my right shoulder lifting plywood. I don't seem to be getting any smarter. I'm finally getting to the fun part, designing and building the inside. She'll have a modest vee berth, a big main cabin and a big bathroom in the back. I have to be flexible with my designs because what I think will work and what will really work are usually not the same. As I mocked up the cabin I saw two major changes I have to make, it's no big deal, I never expect things to go the way I thought they would.



Wally has two floating projects going on, his big garvey with cabin and a floating dock to tie it to. He's just about to the rigging stage, Howard and I will be helping him with that stuff.



Howard made this steering wheel out of really old red cedar. It's different from anything you've seen before.



## From the Tiki Hut

By Dave Lucas

The two Scamps are coming along, not as fast as we usually see here at the shop but there are some reasons. Richard's, the unpainted one, is slow because Richard is not retired and can't spend all his time playing here. Jim's green one would have been much farther along except, like me, he's been on the disabled list so he didn't get out here much for a couple of months. He's back now and hitting it hard. I still recommend to you guys who've been building the same kind of boat for years to get out of your comfort zone and do one of these, they are small but incredibly complex, all you have to do is follow the plans and you'll be fine. (I say that with a shiteaten grin on my face.)



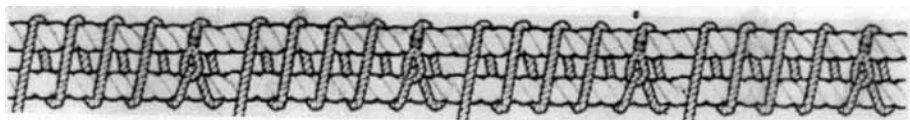
Jimmy is to the point of making and installing his centerboard and trunk and we got to play with melting lead. We could have poured it directly into a hole in the board itself but it's already been glassed so it's neater to mold a circle and insert into the board. Lead is really easy to work with, we use a fried turkey propane stand with a pot for the lead on top. Lead melts at a low temp, 650°, so it's no big deal. When we pour it on a piece of plywood we get bubbles from the wood heating up, again nothing dramatic or dangerous but we need to tap them down with a hammer to get a smooth surface. We want to make damn sure that none of it sticks above the top of our piece. Lead is easy to work with, it cuts easily with a bandsaw but it does not like to be ground. The grinder will fling little bits of lead all over the place. This 8"x3/4" disc weighs about 14lbs.

We decided that we needed a shower house back in the woods and this one is really the deluxe model. We all helped out with some of the work but John did the majority of it, especially the designing and hard stuff. After seeing this I want to shingle my house





like this. Richard is responsible for the artistic designs. Wally is setting his blacksmith shop out by the boats you see in the background. He's forged some of the fixtures for the place. He let me turn the crank to make the fire glow really hot. I told you that we're just a bunch of kids.



This is what my front yard looks like. You're looking at the house and Tiki hut under the trees. It's a one way view, we can see out but you can't see in. Richard's rehabbed coaster swing is perfect on the floating dock. We were sitting out there yesterday watching some kids try to make a Sunfish sailboat go in the fluky winds that happen with all of the trees. It comes from all directions all the time and frustrates us to no end.



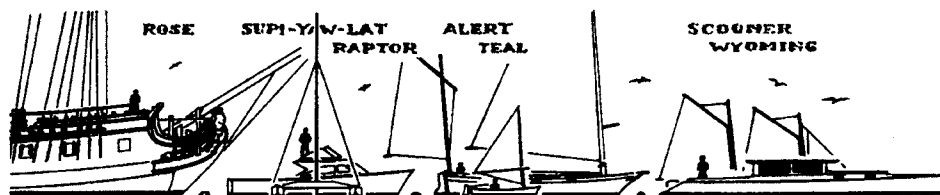
Tom David from up north in Nantucket had a boat that he liked, sort of, *Grub* he called it. The first picture shows how it looked, plum bow, slab sided, no style and it was wet. Instead of getting another boat he fixed this one he had. I've never seen this done to this extent before and think it's brilliant. He just added on to the existing boat with a double hull and now has some real style and flair. It's perfect for him and he has the only one in the world like it. Anyone can buy a boat but only we can make it just what we want.



I'll wrap it up with this one. We all have stories of boats we've sailed on and gone to cool places. Well, I think Joe Haley (or Joe Comet) may have us beat. He crewed on this one, *Voyageur*, for a time back in the old days. I can't imagine sailing a long distance in a boat like this. He's a pilot who flew back when you had to flip the prop to get going. I think he flew a route over to Tom's Island, Nantucket for a while, come to think of it I think Steve Brookman did also. They pay them to do this?







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Let's continue through those changes to GADABOUT started in the August 2017 issue. I should emphasize that while I am doing the large outside alterations, new owner Jay is in charge of doing all the interior alterations, from those new wheelhouse chair bases full of drawers, over galley and plumbing to the master berth and hanging lockers. And more.

The new windshield geometry opens up room behind it for two chairs to pilot and navigate from. Since we are in the middle of making dust, dripping epoxy and paint, we'll look at these new ergonomics in a future issue when Jay is all done finishing his vision, sumptuous chairs, gadgets and drink holders installed.

The now much smaller cuddy is for storage only with access through it to the bow cockpit like before, recycling the fold over to starboard hatch and the fold out and down companionway cover. As before, Jay can walk forward from the helm, through the boat and step out perfectly upright, getting to the ground tackle or the bow gate always surrounded by boat structure, possibly moving about with hands in the pockets. Rushing forward to quickly drop the anchor remains a sure footed routine. And hauling on its rode to get the 35lb plow back aboard is a matter of putting his weight into it, legs well apart, securely standing in the cockpit.

When SACPAS-3 became GADABOUT, to make her a cruiser her new owners needed a full size bed since they are still in love with each other. And they also wanted two basic overnight berths for occasional guests. Reconfiguring the previous helm seat and crew bench arrangements to become a 1+1 dinette on each side of her center aisle is on Jay's agenda as is building the supports for an under mattress storage for the master berth. But the big berth requires more substantial alterations to the boat's layout.

We'll have to extend her roof aft, along with her house sides underneath, to finish with a sliding hatch and companionway aft bulkhead, now leading up to her afterdeck with her single 50hp big prop outboard and 2x50gal tanks out of the way underneath it. That afterdeck will feature an outside helm, and measuring about 7' wide by 5+' long allow four folding chairs for socializing. And the boat will still fit inside that 40' ISO container.

Picture #1 shows the layout of that roof extension, copying that roof lamination with 1/4" skins on both sides, 2" polystyrene foam in between. However, unlike that roof, this extension is framed and reinforced primarily by 1" ply, at the roof to roof joint to be supported by the 1" butt block underneath and left and right to form 2' long rails extending out from the roof to where the doors onto her after deck will be.

Extending that rail clean out of her roof laminate integrates it into the boat's structure rather than adding it later, like the rest of the after deck railing. The length of the extension

## Phil Bolger & Friends On Design

Design Column #515 in *MAIB*  
 GADABOUT aka "SACPAS-3"  
 Landing Craft Personnel  
 Design #681

39'1" x 7'5" x 12" x 225hp x 25kts w/medium  
 load or at approx 10,000lbs displacement  
 25th in a Series of Articles on This Project

should match the width of the doors when opened 180° forward. We'll see how this all works out.



Picture #2 has the assembly emerge on a perfectly flat table with all the fine tuning and catching mistakes right there. Then the typical epoxy based lamination sequence, including roughing up the foam surface with a careful and steadily moving pass with a #60 grit sander. To the left on that picture the opening for the sliding hatch seems rather long, but Jay wanted a gently rising set of steps up to the after deck.



Picture #3 a seemingly pedantic act, but with 1/4" Douglas fir plywood being rather lively, some 110 temporary (drywall) screws were required to assure a perfectly flat lamination while the epoxy cured. And I prefer those holes to be filled completely with ear-swab dribbling epoxy to keep any untreated hollow volumes in the boat to a bare minimum under the (mental) mantra of no built in rot spaces.

Instead of screws, putting on weights would not result in as controlled an array of wood to wood contacts, with weights how-

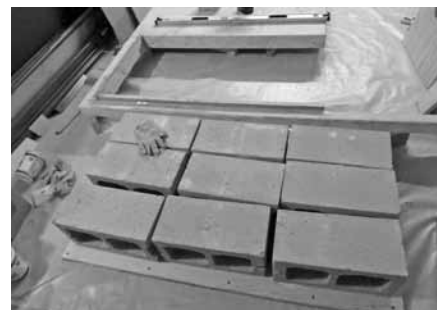
ever good for the large ply to foam contact areas. Since cutting wood and setting up this lamination is a fair amount of work, we'd want to be absolutely sure that the finished work will indeed be flat and will match the big roof when the final joint is created. Just to refresh the memory, her roof is foam cored for insulation and condensation prevention.



Picture #4 sees one coat of 10oz glass-cloth in epoxy on the upper/outside surface of that roof extension with the very desirable wet in wet application of light filler to smooth the cloth weaves, applied here some three hours after the glass and epoxy to allow things to not wrinkle or move and still get the chemical wet in wet epoxy to epoxy action. Therefore, no glass will be sanded, but only that coat of filler smoothed to perfection, ready for straight paint, no primer required. The hatch coaming will be installed separately.



Picture #5 features the emerging roof extension with the coaming installed. In the picture's foreground though, the two 1/2" layers of ply, weighted down by cinder blocks, are curing to produce that sliding hatch, once the glass and epoxy treatment is done.



Picture #6 sees work on the underside of the whole roof extension. Here the 3hp soft start (we want that!) router is in the middle of rounding over the lower inside corner of the coaming assembly. After passes with a smaller bit to break down that sharp edge, here the 1" round over bit gets to show off.



Picture #7 features the result (with my hand for scale) offering a smooth rounded set of corners to match the human body coming up the steps to the afterdeck as it emerges through this cutout in the roof. Since boats typically move about, particularly with folks moving around aboard, it would only be a matter of time before any sharp edges next to the passing head, shoulders, chest would do damage. Here it will be just a mild or even an audible thud, but not a cut or worse.



Picture #8 has the underside glassed and filler coated with that glass adding tensile strength against folks stomping around on top or 3' of snow accumulating and, of course, that surface will never check. And since they'll be looking at it laying in the bed, they'd want to make it really smooth with a fine satin gloss paint job to finish, something then done here on the table as well.



Picture #9 has the finished, painted piece on the scale coming in at some 94lbs, more than we'd think between all that foam and the light 1/4" ply pieces. But those 1" ply stacks here and there, plus glass and epoxy and paint do add up.



Picture #10 with the two mirror image house side extensions suggest next steps.



Picture #11 features the various tools necessary to cut a vertical slot in the original house's after corners. With the boat outside, keeping a lockable door during this construction seemed advisable. Therefore, since the house side extensions needed to be attached with butt straps on the inside of each joint, that slot should be at least 3/4" wide to allow laminating in the 1/2" rounded over butt straps. Between ruining various blades of the jigsaw and the Fein Multi-Master tool this nasty work on both vertical sides of the house would allow installation of the sides while keeping the original bulkhead and door in place.



Picture #12 has the first dry fit assembly of the house sides standing, with temporary bracing against wind and against shoving an unbalanced shoulder into an as yet weak set of joints. Some will remember the nicely reinforced aft cockpit coaming some 2" wide with an extra hard set of factory built fiber-glass angles, all of which work perfectly but now had to be cut out and discarded in order to produce a smooth inside joint for the butt strap and plain butt joint on the outside filled and smoothed.



Picture #13 shows the house sides disassembled again, with old comforters across sharp edges and, of course, on that old roof, before Jay and I move that 94lb roof extension up to the top. The house sides and bracing would have been in the way.



Picture #14 features everything in place, including that 1" thick transverse butt strap under the joint with that 2"x4" brace to support matters until everything is closed in. The house sides are longer since once the rear bulkhead is in place they will be cut to an angle sloping forward with curve on the bottom to match the after deck level, and on top to flow into the underside of those hand rails protruding from the roof laminate.





Picture #15 shows the butt strap to make a stern bulkhead much higher than the 4' wide ply sheet, epoxied (but no glass cloth) and prepped for installation and later interior painting.

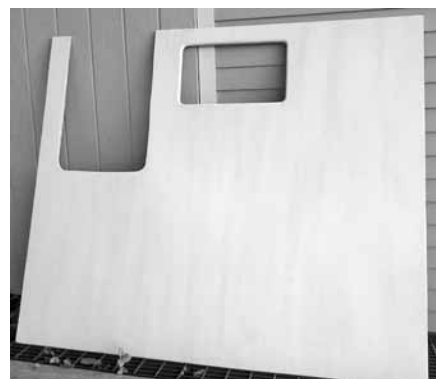


Picture #16 shows the epoxied, glassed and painted outward face of the rear bulkhead.

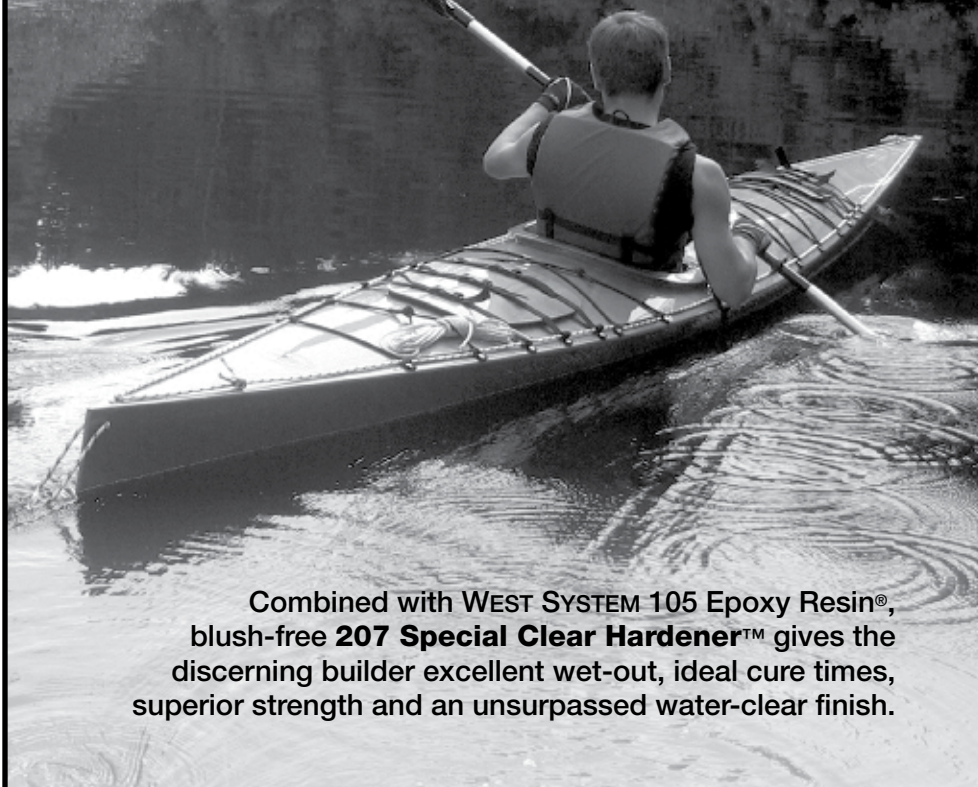
Picture #17 has that bulkhead in place with a temporary padlockable door hung, good enough for the boat to not represent an invitation to some kids to explore her insides and rooftop in our otherwise very low crime area.



I claim that this sequence of reports on her alterations gets us right into the joy and mess of this work familiar to those who get to show off the fruits of their labor. And we are not done yet.



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**I., Sec/Ed:** Baby Bootlegger is a simple, solid, scratch 1/32 model/diorama built in 2003, of a flapper-era gentleman's racer.

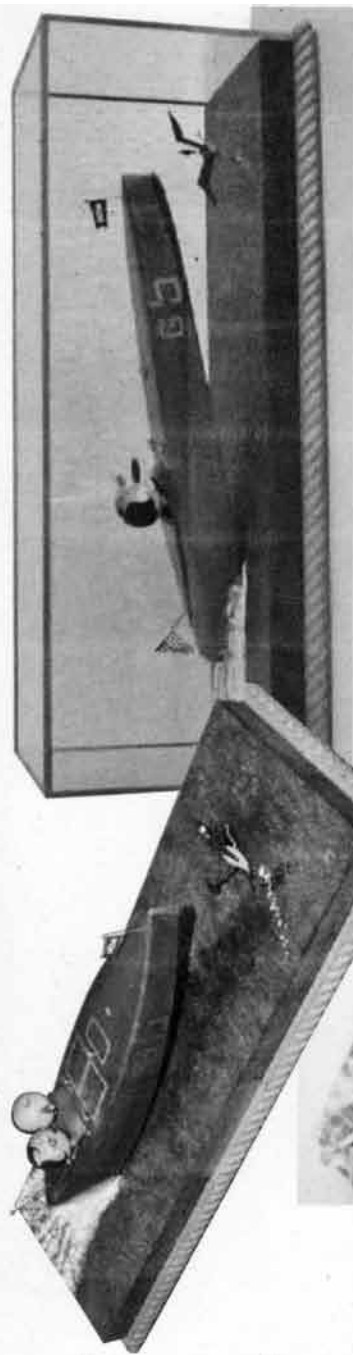
Baby Bootlegger, The Gold Cup Champion By Fred Farley - Unlimited Hydroplane Historian "One of the most beautiful race boats of all time, BABY BOOTLEGGER achieved fame as the winner of the APBA Gold Cup in 1924 and 1925 and the Dodge Memorial Trophy in 1925.

Designed by George Crouch and built by Henry Nevins, the construction of BABY BOOTLEGGER was unique. The sides of the mahogany hull were rounded into the deck with a gradually changing curve from stem to stern. The advantage of this design was that it permitted the construction of a light and strong hull with a minimum of wind resistance.

The boat initially used a V-8 Hispano-Suiza engine, specifically the licensed Wright-Hisso version. Built with 719 cubic inch piston displacement, the engine was sleeved to meet the 625 cubic inch maximum of the day. The popular "Hisso" was used in the Spad aircraft during World War I. The owner Caleb Bragg, was a successful auto racer, a World War I test pilot, an officer of Wright Aeronautical, and--by all accounts--a most thorough engineer."

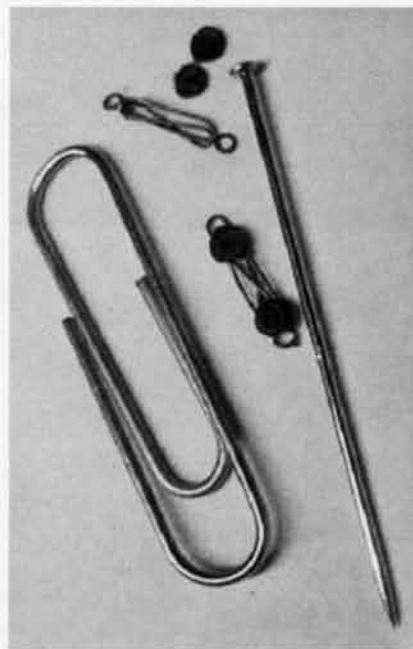
Hull is mahogany. All of the flat metal trim is painted on in silver and gold. The water is carved MDF painted with acrylics. The Canada Goose prop is Basswood and the Flapper heads are painted wooden, off the shelf, balls. Case is acrylic trimmed in brass angle, with the rope base trim from Constantine's Wood Center, Ft. Lauderdale.

Next, I showed my current solution to simulating 1/96 deadeyes. I set up two headless pins and wrapped soft iron wire. Then I punched 0.085" dia. discs from black cover stock and applied them (4) to both sides with Elmer's. The wire takes all of the load. They are then tied to the shrouds with black Fly-Tying line.

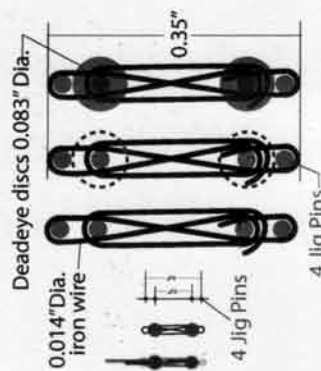


**Sec/Ed displayed a 2003 fast, fun, scratch diorama of a simplified Gold Cup champ, Baby Bootlegger.**

**And, on SS Mascotte, a NEW technique for simulating deadeyes.**



**SIMULATED 1/96 DEAD EYES**  
Wind soft wire. Deadeyes are added discs, sandwiching the wire falls





# My SS Mascotte Project

By Irwin Schuster

The BBB was a massive wooden hotel (400,000sf) built in 1897 by Henry B. Plant. The saved section is to be an inn of 38,000sf with 35 guest rooms and a period “reading room”/lounge. *Mascotte*, launched in 1885, ran on a regular schedule between Tampa, Key West and Havana, carrying passengers, cargo and mail. She also transported Rough Riders in the Spanish American War, wounded and ill (malaria, etc). She saved the Tampa cigar industry by bringing tobacco en masse, even packed in staterooms, to sustain the rolling factories during hostilities.

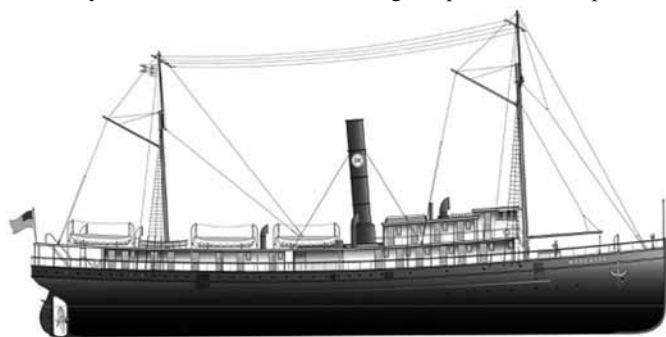
Off tourist season she served between Boston and Gloucester and, past her prime, around the Northeast into the late 1920s. My illustration shows the ship under the Peninsula & Occidental identification assumed after Plant’s death in 1899. P&O was Henry Flagler’s line.

Only the hull is documented in original plans so the superstruc-

ture has been teased out of photos and rough deck plans. Likely due to this lack of good material, only one previous model of *Mascotte* has been uncovered, that being in the Mayor’s conference room in Tampa City Hall, but it has significant shortcomings, to be kind.

For those interested, the ship was 207.9’x30’x20.6’, 520 net tons, powered by twin triple expansion engines delivering about 1,200hp, with a speed of 17 statute mph. Very fast for her time and state of the art with Eeeelectricity!

The Plant-Mascotte project has dominated my past year and I will be happy to get back to smaller watercraft.



S.S. MASCOTTE

LOA: 207'-9" X BEAM: 30'-0"

BUILT BY WILLIAM CRAMP AND SONS SHIP AND ENGINE BUILDING COMPANY, LAUNCHED 1886

OWNER: H.B. PLANT CO./PLANT IMPROVEMENT COMPANY/THE PLANT SYSTEM

AFTER 1899, PENINSULAR & OCCIDENTAL STEAMSHIP COMPANY

BASED PRIMARILY ON AN IMAGE PUBLISHED CA. 1905-1907



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I just finished watching the America's Cup races and the trials leading up to them on TV. Maybe my time could have been better spent, but how often are boating events on TV? To me the action seemed pretty slow, although the speed on the water was impressive. More often than not the "boat" that won the start won the race without a lot of additional drama. I guess I'm stuck remembering the match races between the various 12-Meter yachts with their beautiful hulls and huge billowing white sails. Now it's more a contest between two skating billboards.

I suspect that more than having real advertising value, the huge graphics on the racers are just a way to justify tax deductions for the sponsors, feeding taxpayer money into what has always been the sport of the super wealthy. Maybe Lipton and Vanderbilt had similar angles and for sure some of the 12-Meter teams were set up as non profit entities or belonged to similar institutions. Maybe the graphics just confirm what has always been there.

My first interest in the America's Cup was in college when a friend who knew Ted Hood got me in past all the security to see *Constellation* under construction in 1963. She was the defender in 1964. I was impressed, but my motivations went elsewhere and I never got involved in racing. For the America's Cup teams it would help to be born into the sport, but certainly there were many exceptions, people who made a point of putting themselves in the right place at the right time. My following the races was restricted to the media, and I remember when there were live radio commentators calling the races just like they were at baseball games or the Indy 500.

As TV with onboard cameras replaced radio, the action was a lot more compelling. I nearly got in trouble on a two boat delivery in 1986 when I stopped at a motel for a few hours of sleep and ended up spending most of my time watching the race broadcast live from Freemantle, Australia, in the middle of the night. This was the first defense after our loss of the Cup in 1983.

I was scheduled to meet two customers, both coming some distance to rendezvous at a boatyard near Columbus, Ohio, at noon the next day and I would have been pretty unpopular if I had been late. I sat on the edge of the bed unable to turn the TV off, knowing that I was setting myself up for a rough morning of driving. I finally slept about two hours and somehow stayed awake until I met my

## Slow Bobsleds?

By Boyd Mefferd

customers. I just remember that the action was truly exciting and it was just like I was actually there onboard. The coverage of the most recent Cup races has been pretty drab by comparison.

So much has changed since that last set of races between 12-Meter boats. It seems that the big silver cup is the only thing that has remained constant and maybe that is inevitable. It is strange, however, that there is no longer a need for the word "sail," either as a noun or a verb. The main has become the "wing" and now the action is called "flying" the boats. The course is now referred to as the "track." There are no new terms yet for a tack and a jibe and a jib is still a jib (a kiss is still a kiss) as time goes by, but that's about where it starts and ends.

The races are shorter than they used to be and because of the greatly increased speed, the elapsed time is much less. The racers are basically humans powering hydraulic contraptions and the limits and set distances are probably based on human endurance. New Zealand, the challenger, ran their hydraulic pumps primarily with stationary bike devices, while the US depended on hand powered grinders. This probably wasn't the determining factor but it was strange to see the crew all lined up in the narrow hulls, heads down so as to be more aerodynamic. It wouldn't have been hard to confuse them with bobsled racers.

Going around the buoys a few more times might have given a racer that was behind a bit more of a chance to catch up after a bad start, but that probably would have been beyond the limits of the crew to grind or pedal, just like there is no chance that there will ever be a second lap added at Churchill Downs. In past years even those onboard primarily for brute strength and endurance were experienced sailors. Now for New Zealand, some were bicycle racers.

A cynic might say that the short duration of the race shows how much confidence there is in the equipment, or that for such a dull event NBC didn't want to block out much more than an hour and a half.

I don't know what the TV ratings for the America's Cup were but here in Hartford it was hard to find much more than a couple of lines on the sports pages. I guess we'll know

in three years if the networks pick up the next challenge. It's hard to stop rich people from doing their thing, particularly when it's part of a tradition dating back to 1851, and maybe yacht clubs that sponsor the teams would be just as happy outside of the spotlight.

If there is coverage in three years, it will be interesting to see what new technology can be developed in the time available. I'm sure that the aim will be to make the racers go even faster and probably it will be heavy on technology and light on the qualities that made the 12-Meter boats so fun to watch. I recall being at the Wooden Boat Show at the Newport Yachting Center (before it was the *WoodenBoat* Show) one evening watching two of the charter 12s tack up the channel effortlessly in a light breeze, seeming to go almost into the wind and coming about with just a small course change. It was simply magic.

I don't expect that there will be a return to the era of 12-Meter boats. Olin Stephens himself said that he could not improve on his design for *Courageous* in 1974 and after that the speed was more dependent on winged keels and the sort, a hint at the foils that were to come. Billionaires who made their fortunes in technology are comfortable with developments in technology and beauty and magic take a far back seat.

It doesn't seem that there can be any practical commercial applications for human powered hydraulic systems, but what can be learned from the foils may be another matter. We already obviously have the high speed ferries (one ferry captain customer retired rather than run one) and a family member who sells paddle sports equipment says that there are small foils to go on paddle boards and even kayaks. Everyone wants to go fast.

People with much more money than they can spend and a similarly sized egos may be all it takes to keep the America's Cup going well into the future. I guess it was always an extreme sport. Just look at the J Boats! Maybe the racers will get even faster and the elapsed times lower. Maybe the rules will change to allow racing in an even smaller range of wind speeds, reducing the variables of nature and allowing even more radical rigs. I guess it's fine if this just goes on as an exercise for the rich, a chance to spread their money around a little, but if it's going to remain a set of events that are popular with a somewhat larger public, some way will have to be found to inject some of the magic and beauty of the earlier days back into the contests.



My various boats have been propelled by paddles, oars, sails, a combustion engine or a combination thereof. One of the propulsion systems I have always found of interest is the Stirling Cycle engine. Robert Stirling was a Scottish minister who invented the first practical example of a closed cycle air engine in 1816. The Stirling engine operates cyclic compression and expansion of air or other gas at different temperatures. It is a thermodynamic system in which the working fluid (air in this case) is permanently contained within the system, and regenerative describes the use of a specific type of internal heat exchanger and thermal store known as the regenerator. The inclusion of a regenerator differentiates the Stirling engine from other closed cycle hot air engines. There are Stirling cycle engines being used as generators on boats and also being used as refrigeration (the engine is run in reverse). I have a model Stirling engine that runs off hot water and I have seen pictures of a fan that ran off a kerosene lamp.

One projected application was to use a Stirling engine to run a generator that supplied electricity to the vehicle/boat's electric motor, as well as providing the hydrogen to provide the heat (external combustion) using a Cornish "water motor" invented and patented (in 1982) by Francois P. Cornish. This device generates hydrogen, on demand, by



the immersion of an aluminum wire in water and subjecting it to an electrical charge. The water reacts with the charged aluminum wire to produce hydrogen gas (as well as oxygen gas) and an aluminum oxide component. Since the hydrogen gas is consumed by the engine as it is created by the system, there is no storage problem. As long as there is water and aluminum wire it will keep going. Both are interesting concepts with much more information available on the web.

Have you looked at any of the electrical plugs lately? In the early days of CB and related electrical items there was a warning about plugging in the positive connection to the device correctly since there was a good chance of destroying the device if the positive connection was plugged into the negative (ground) connection. Over time manufacturers modified their connection plugs so they could only fit one way. However, not all connections, especially internal ones, are obvious.

During the Falklands War an Argentine submarine made a number of unsuccessful attacks on British ships. The attacks failed when the torpedoes went off target after being launched. The torpedoes failed because the internal gyro "tumbled" when switched to the inside power source after launching. An after the fact analysis found that there was an internal connector that could be installed two ways. If installed incorrectly during routine maintenance, the power supply to the gyro was reversed. And there was no way to test this connection before launching the torpedo.

I read a short report on the loss of a fighter on takeoff due to the same type of problem. If a module in the control system was installed incorrectly, the plane's nose went down when the pilot pulled back on the stick. Nothing in the instruction manual noted this possible problem and a lot of "finger pointing" went on until a careful inspection (and some ground testing) found the problem.

"All I could see from where I stood was marsh and piney woods. I turned and looked the other way and saw three islands in the bay." With apologies to Edna St Vincent Millay and her poem "Renesance," the above was the beginning of some doggerel verse that guided members of the Apalachee Bay

Yacht Club on a treasure hunt. One of the "treasures" (a plastic container with a lid and a note inside saying "ABYC Treasure") was buried on one of the islands. When found, the container was returned to the starting point for a prize. Since the prize was not much of anything, the joy was in the search.

Since not everyone had a suitable small boat, there were additional treasures buried on land with appropriate verses to guide the searchers. In one case people stood on top of the treasure and dug around it without finding the container. One of the dogs (ABYC almost became a Kennel and Yacht Club) with the group dug up the container. The dog's owner insisted that he get the prize instead of the dog.

Another treasure was stepped over by searcher #1 and dug up by searcher #2. The key on that hunt was the word "pace" (two steps) and the length of the leg of the searcher. In another search, the treasure was buried at high tide and so noted in the "clues." The event took place at low tide and none of those involved considered the tidal difference when moving 12 paces to the north. The treasure was recovered by the event organizer after the fact. Such an event can be a lot of fun to set up, enjoyable to those who like such activities and the post event party can be enjoyed by all.

Does your boat have a bilge pump alarm that you can hear (or see the blinking light) at the helm? Did you install a second pump (or a float switch alarm) above the bilge pump normally used to extract rain water (and the like)? I have been reading a number of articles about boats sinking (or nearly so) because there was no alarm switch to tell those on board that the water in the bilge was higher than normal. The second bilge pump (with an alarm) would reveal that something is wrong with the primary pump or the inflow has exceeded the outflow from the pump. If nothing else, a float switch hooked to an alarm might be good insurance.

If you do not want to spend the money, I saw a very low cost float switch that used a stiff plastic tube with a sealed cell cork float therein. Stuck in the top of the cork was a used match stick. When the water level raised the cork (and stick) a given distance, the stick pressed two pieces of metal together making an electrical contact that rang a loud 12 volt buzzer. Oh yes, there was an appropriate fuse in the wiring just in case something shorted.

The safety people want us all to wear PFDs when on the water. There are all kinds on the market these days. While an important criteria is that the PFD fits the person (child, dog, etc), to me, after proper fit, a major criteria is that it can be seen when the person is in the water.

Many years ago a crew member was separated from his boat (a Fireball) when the boat capsized. My wife and I were in the next boat in the race and went to pick him up. It became obvious that he was not going to get back to the boat. He was wearing a PFD and floating nicely in the water. But he was not really that visible! If we had not seen him go in and kept track of where he was, we might not have found him as quickly as we did. A head bobbing in the water is not much of a target and a faded red PFD does not show up well either. Forget being stylish with your PFD, you want one in collision orange or lime green which should contrast well with the surrounding water.

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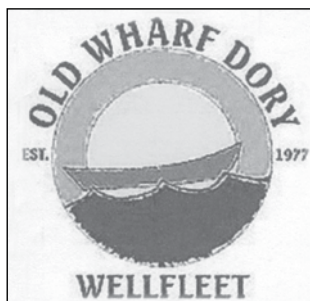
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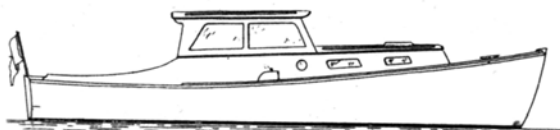


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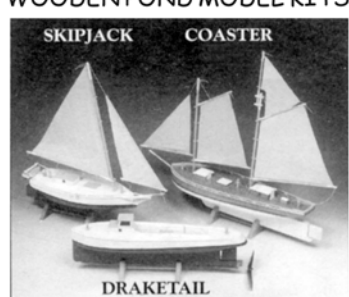
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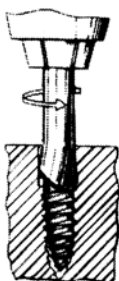
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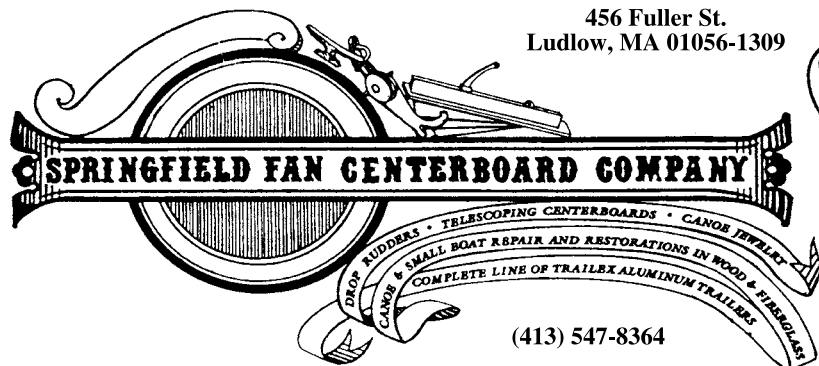
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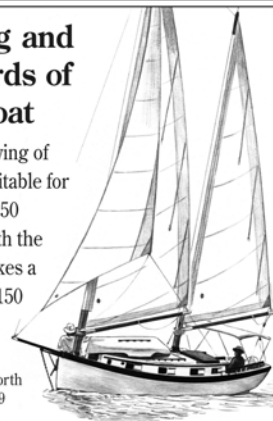
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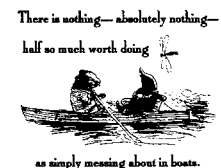
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